

Happy Holidays



On Top Of The News

Email: news@arubatoday.com

Website: www.arubatoday.com; Tuesday, December 16, 2008



Price of a barrel  
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INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

KREMLIN KLASH



Police officers cordon off the area of an anti-Kremlin protest in Moscow, Sunday, Dec. 14, 2008, with a New Year tree in the background. Police thwarted an anti-Kremlin protest organized by chess great Garry Kasparov's opposition group Sunday, seizing demonstrators and shoving them into trucks.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS B7

SPORTS NEWS

SHOW CANCELED



This July 27, 2008 file photo shows Jon Bon Jovi, a majority owner of the Philadelphia Soul, holding the trophy overhead after the Soul's 59-56 win over the San Jose SaberCats in the ArenaBowl XXII football game in New Orleans.

Sports Today Page B10

# Cuba and the Caribbean United for Cooperation



By Juan Diego Nusa Penalver  
With the objective of strengthening cooperation ties and to identify new initiatives in the sectors that can contribute to the socio-economic advancement of the region, the 3rd Summit between Cuba and the 14 Caribbean Community Member States will meet on Monday.

The main issue to be discussed in the eastern city of Santiago de Cuba is: Cooperation for Strengthened Integration of the Caribbean, a subject still pending in our America, but vital for this vulnerable region of almost 27 million people. This fragile area, badly hit in recent years by powerful hurricanes, continues to face enormous political, economic, social and natural challenges that require the attention and common action of the respective participating governments at the summit.

Continued on Page 3

## Safety comes first, says UConn's director of scientific diving



by Karen A. Grava

BONAIRE - His job has a simple bottom line. Or rather, line to the bottom. Everyone who goes down must come up. But for Jeffrey Godfrey, director of scientific diving for UConn's marine sciences programs in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, getting to the bottom and back up again requires planning, planning, and more planning.

Continued on Page 4

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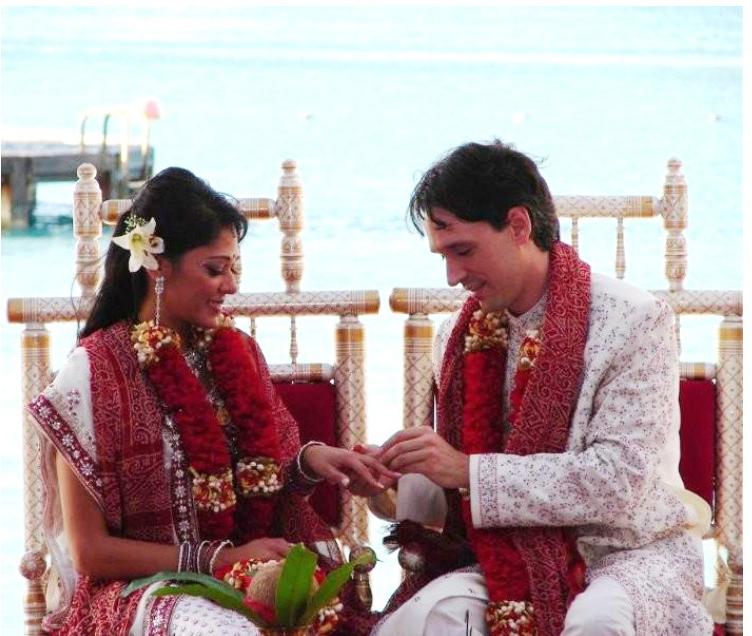
# Shilpa and Mark bring ancient Hindu wedding traditions to Aruba's shores



PALM BEACH - This past Saturday afternoon, The Westin Resort hosted the wedding of Shilpa Kanani and Mark Dolfato. The destination wedding brought friends and family from the United States to the island of Aruba for several days of festivities. The couple decided to honor Shilpa's Indian roots, and with the assistance of the wedding and event professionals at The Westin, held a traditional Hindu ceremony on the beach.

A Mandap (altar) was set up seaside, where the couple exchanged vows in a wedding ceremony based on Hindu traditions and rituals that originated from ancient Sanskrit scriptures. After the ceremony, a sunset cocktail reception was held, followed by a formal dinner at the resort.

Aruba is one of the hottest island destinations for weddings and honeymoons, and The Westin Resort, Aruba is one of only a few resorts on the island with a team dedicated exclusively to coordinating weddings and assisting couples in the planning of all aspects of their special day. □



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## CUBA-CARIBBEAN

### Continued from Front Page

That is why it is important for the Heads of State or Government to analyze important issues for our peoples like the serious financial, energy, food and environmental problems and their impact on the region.

The participants will also examine the position of Cuba and CARICOM for the upcoming Latin American and Caribbean Summit on Integration and Development sponsored by Brazil, and the current situation and perspectives of cooperation among the group of Caribbean nations.

The first of these summits was held in Havana in December of 2002, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Barbados, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago, a brave gesture by these four CARICOM member nations that marked the beginning of the end of Latin American and Caribbean isolation imposed by successive US administration against Cuba.

The time since then has witnessed important advances in relations in the region, especially in cooperation ties in education, training of human resources, health, energy, agriculture and other sectors.

In this sense, and loyal to the principle of solidarity among nations, 778 Cuban health professionals of them 392 doctors work free of charge in Belize, Dominica, Guyana, Haiti, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Surinam as part of the Integral Health

Program.

In Antigua and Barbuda, Aruba, Bonaire, Grenada, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, St. Kitts and Nevis and Trinidad and Tobago there are another 235 Cuban health professionals of them 60 doctors in different modalities.

The achievements in ten years of this type of cooperation are impressive and highly appreciated by the Caribbean governments and people. During that time, some 17 million consultations were carried out, over 123,000 birth deliveries made and more than 300,000 operations performed.

For its part, the Operation Milagro eye program, sponsored by Havana and Caracas has improved the vision of over 54,200 Caribbean people in 15 countries.

Significant results were reported in the training of human resources, since 1961,

over 3,279 Caribbean youths have been prepared as professions in Cuban universities of them 1,043 in medicine.

The Cuban people value highly the solidarity policy of its immediate neighbours, a region which contributed in breaking the White House imposed political and diplomatic isolation during the 1960's and 1970's against Cuba despite the international community's condemnation of the economic, commercial and financial blockade against the island.

Solidarity does not stop and after the recent hurricanes that devastated Cuba, a brigade from St. Vincent and the Grenadines is working in the Isle of Youth aiding in the reestablishment of the electricity network in that part of the Cuban territory.



## CAKE OUT by Chris

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**SAFETY COMES FIRST*****Continued from Front Page***

Training and more training. Testing and re-testing of equipment. And even calling the dive off when things don't look exactly

right. Ensuring safety Godfrey says safety is the first order of business on any of the 400 to 500 scientific dives undertaken each year by UConn faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates.



The dives take place in locations around the world, including Japan, Antarctica, Australia, the Caribbean, the Gulf of California, and even Long Island Sound: "Anywhere there's water," Godfrey says.

Hazards to divers include running out of air, diving too deeply or too long for the equipment, wildlife, and especially boats, which may not heed the red and white flag that warns of divers below. The problems vary with the location of the diving. Training dives, which take place right off Avery Point, face hazards from murky water, boats, and potentially also airplanes from nearby Groton-New London Airport.

"It's easy to get separated in the water in Long Island Sound," Godfrey says. "It's not like diving in the Caribbean, where there's 100 feet of visibility."

Scientific divers must be certified, and the regulations are more stringent than those for recreational divers. Certification requires 100 hours of training, one open water snorkel dive, and four deep water dives to ensure safety.

Godfrey joined UConn nine years ago from the Utah State University Fish and Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit, where he was a research diver.

He is current president of the American Academy of Underwater Sciences, which sets the standards for university diving programs. He teaches two courses in scientific diving, which are open to both graduate students and undergraduates, and often accompanies UConn faculty on dives.

Although practice dives are often in only seven feet of water, many go deeper.

One of Godfrey's dives involved going down 240 feet to help revise the site map of the U.S.S. Monitor. The wreck of this armored turret gunboat, which sank in a storm in 1862 off Cape Hatteras in North Carolina, is now a marine sanctuary. During another of his dives off the East Coast, a siphonophore – the world's longest animal – swam by. Closely related to a jellyfish, the one he saw was 70 or 80 feet long, he says.

A dive off Deception Island in the Antarctic revealed piles of whale bones sitting on the bottom, left over from the days of a whaling station there.

**Survival instinct**  
Was he ever afraid? Not exactly, he says, "but there are times when your survival gene kicks in.

"For example, once at Montauk Point, Long Island, where records show the largest great white shark was caught, he watched the stripers and blues running as hard as they could instead of following their normal pattern of circling and pausing.

"I just put my head down and

kept working," Godfrey says. "I wondered what was on the other end of the school, but figured it was something I didn't need to see."

Peter Auster, associate professor of marine sciences, says he occasionally sees and interacts with dolphins, large sea turtles, sea lions, and whales underwater.

"We're down there studying the marine life," he says, "and they are sometimes studying us."

Auster says he brings Godfrey along on expeditions that are technically challenging.

"His job is to make sure that the same number of people who go underwater come back," he says. "But he's a scientist as well, and aids in the success of our work."

Godfrey notes that planning is critically important.

"We've never had an incident," he says.

"It's a hazardous environment, so we go out of the way to do training and dive planning. Our goal is to be very safe as well as efficient. And if something's not right – the water is rough or something isn't going according to plan – we call the dive off and come back another day." □





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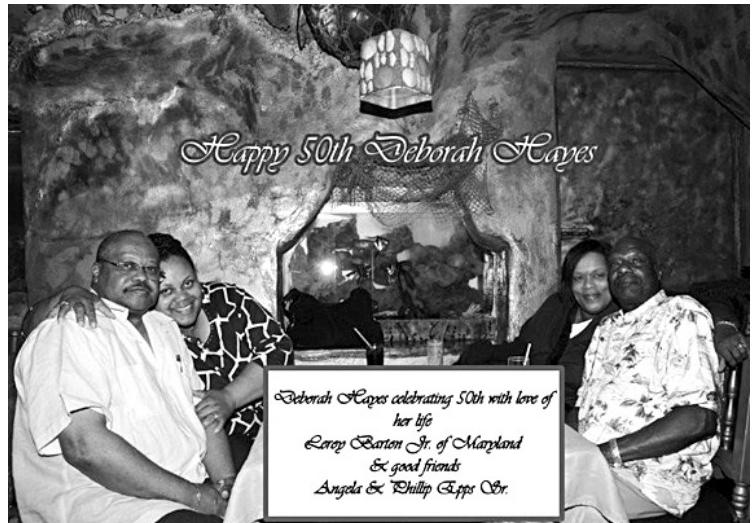
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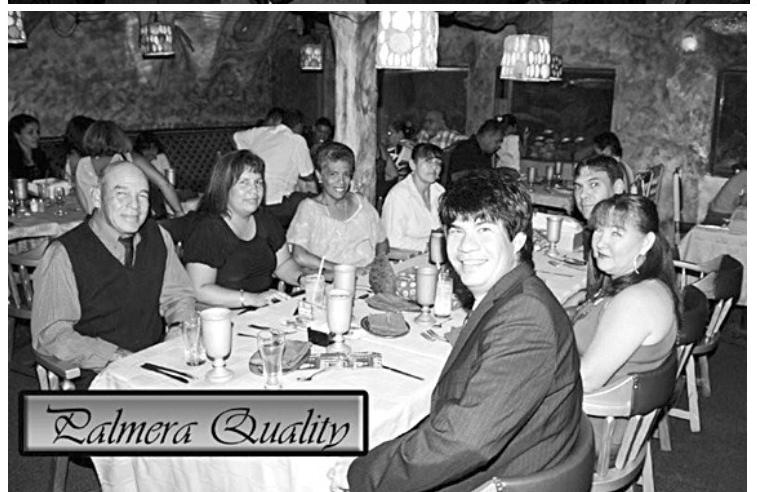
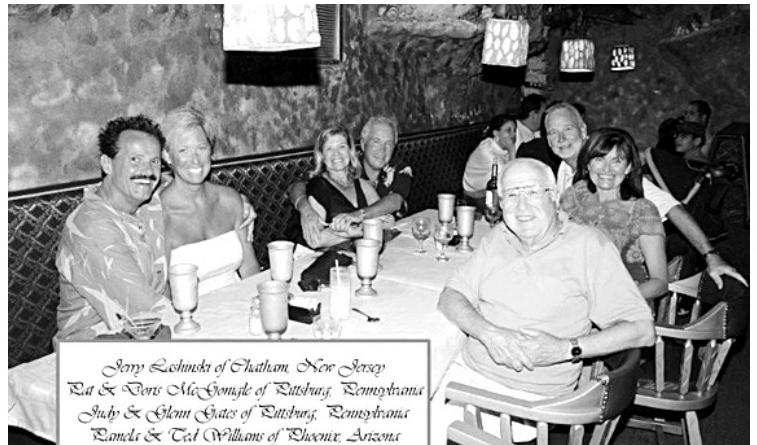
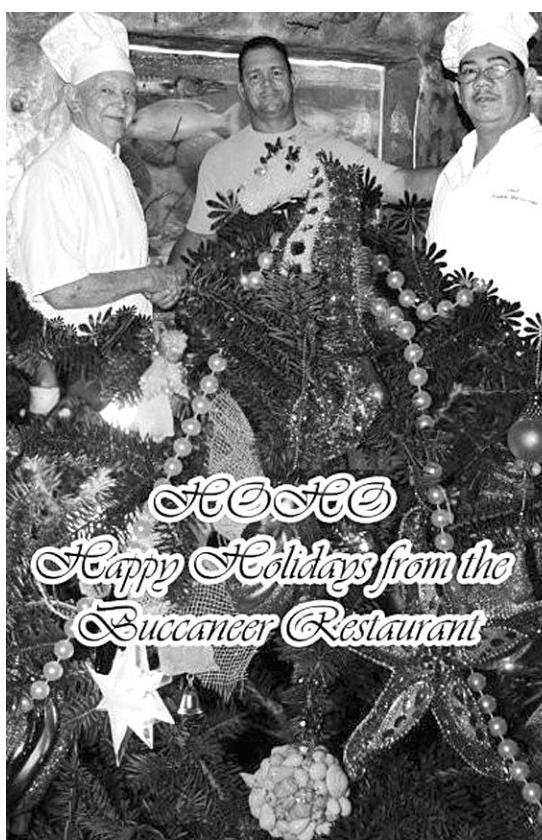
# Buccaneer Guests enjoy holiday celebrations



NOORD – This past weekend the Buccaneer was in full swing with repeat guests and new comers for the holiday season. Buccaneer is proud to announce that last week marked 28 years that the establishment first opened its doors and is proud to serve loyal patrons for many more years to come.

Christmas parties & Christmas gatherings were amongst the many diners who enjoyed the dining experience.

Deborah Hayes celebrated her 50th birthday with her boyfriend Leroy Barton Jr. of Maryland & good friends Angela & Phillip



Epps Sr. This is Deborah & Leroy's first time to the island and Angela & Phillip's ninth time returning to Aruba. This year they are guests at Westin Resort and have enjoyed their vacation, especially the Safari tour where Angela was the brave driver and enjoyed discovering the island's natural wonder. Phillip was looking for a great fishing experience but could not find other persons to join him in Deep Sea fishing, looks like next year he will go on the aruba.com forum and ask around.

Jerry Lashinski of Chatham, New Jersey has over 3 decades of returning to his home away from home. He started coming to Aruba in 1977 when there were only 3 hotels. Aruba has flourished throughout the years and has become a tropical paradise. Jerry is a man full of life and has made many friends in Aruba. His home in Aruba is at La Cabana Resort where he feels welcomed and loved by everyone. Jerry began coming to Aruba with his lovely wife Ronny who also enjoyed Aruba because of her Dutch ancestry she felt always at home. Ronny passed away 6 years ago but her memory still lives on through her husband who cherishes every moment. On Saturday night Jerry brought in 3 couples to dine at his favorite restaurant, the Buccaneer. Pat & Doris McGonigle & Judy & Glenn Gates of Pittsburgh joined in on the dining experience for their first time and were overwhelmed with the service and delicious food. "This is by far the Best restaurant in Aruba, after 8 years of returning to Aruba I never heard of Buccaneer, we have Jerry to thank and will return every year. We loved the cabbage

and raved to our waitress Becky who gave us the secret recipe", stated Pat.

Pamela & Ted Williams flew in from Phoenix to return to La Cabana and enjoy their holidays and friends. They have been returning to Aruba for 20 years and love all that Aruba has to offer. They also joined in for dinner at the Buccaneer with Jerry and are repeat guests to the establishment.

The Government Human Resource Department (DPO) enjoyed their annual Christmas celebration. Judging by the many happy faces and pleasant conversations, the thirteen attendees enjoyed their evening. Mr. Leopoldo Hernandis, Deputy Director of the Department held a speech about the outstanding performance of the department during the year 2008 and the recognition that the Government Human Resource Department (DPO) receive from other Government Departments about the good result of different project's and team spirit of all employees.

Co-Founder, Ethan Wong of Palmera Quality Products and associates joined in for a holiday celebration at the Buccaneer. Palmera is known in the Aruban market and continues to grow hand in hand with the island's economy. The Palmera team has become a true connoisseur of quality and proudly labels many of its products: "A Taste of Aruba". So if you are looking for great rum than pick up a Palmera Rum which makes a terrific holiday gift.

The Golden Ladies were in festive attire while dining in one of their favorite restaurants. The Golden Girls was founded in November of last year with a total

of 9 women who get together once a month. These ladies love to discuss what is going on in the world around us as well as play games, exchange recipes and just talk about good old times. They meet up once a month and have dinner at different homes and love to meet up at different cafés and local restaurants. The ladies were delighted with their Surf & Turf dinners as well as Seafood Thermidor, seafood platters and everything else that the Buccaneer is known for. Following their dinner the ladies met up at Rita Tromps home to exchange gifts while enjoying homemade desserts, flavored tea and listening to Christmas music. The jolly crew of Civil Aviation was also in festive attire while enjoying the holidays at the legendary restaurant. Selma Arends made the reservations for the happy crew and informed the Buccaneer that the associates were very pleased with the delicious entrée's and the seafood fettuccine was the best she ever had.

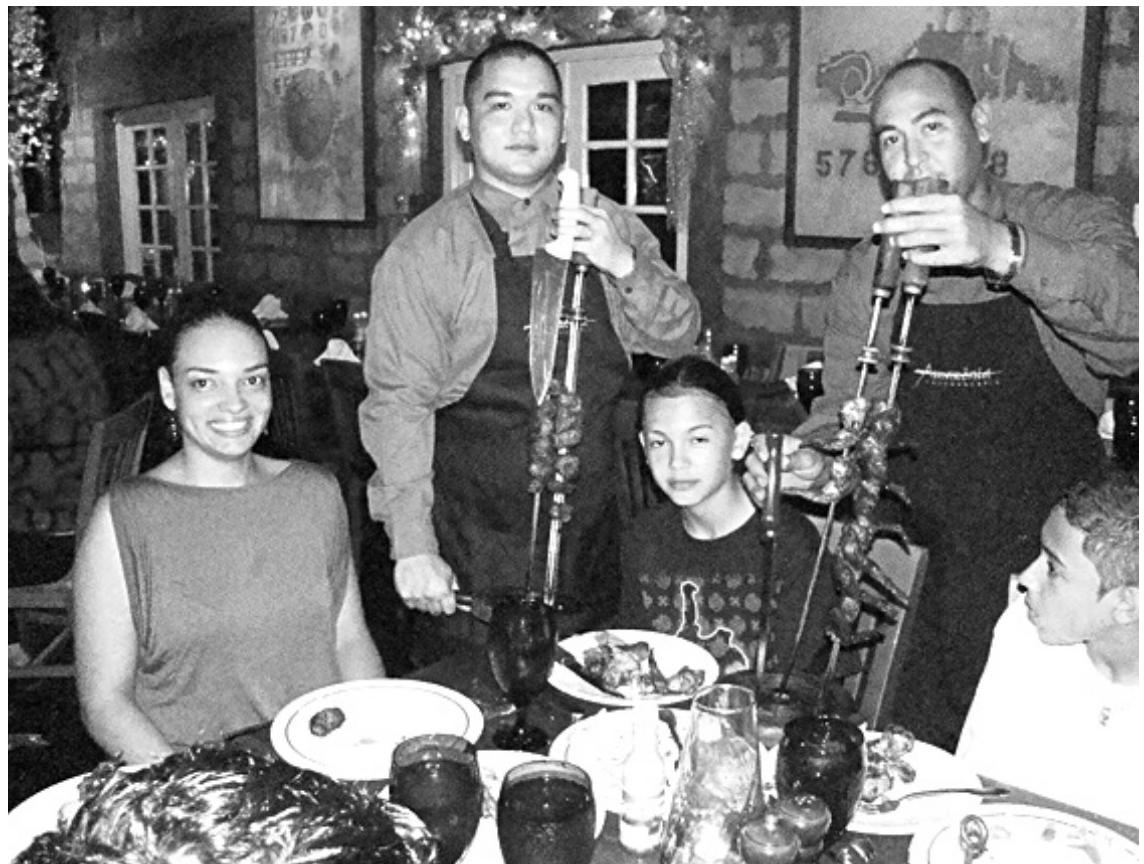
Buccaneer is celebrating Christmas Eve this year with an incredible Buffet; this will be a grand dining experience that no one wants to miss.

The owner Chef Josef Munzenhofer wants to thank everyone for your support in returning through the doors of his establishment.

"I built this restaurant as a dream and now it is my legacy which all of you have made it what it is today". I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year" God Bless you and your families with a lifetime of love, peace and wonderful Aruba memories. □

**Photos by Angela Munzenhofer**

# Amazonia Satisfies Colegio Students



PALM BEACH - Amazonia Churrascaria received a group of high school students celebrating the holidays in community. The almost adults, still teens, exhibited considerable appetites going through the salad bar with great enthusiasm then voraciously attacking anything offered by the gauchos, grilled meats on giant skewers, carved table side, continuously, until the students begged for mercy, and flipped the green marker to red. Pictured here celebrating a festive occasion, the colegio students. □

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# Sunset Grille, a prime Steakhouse also offering Spa Cuisine



PALM BEACH – The Sunset Grille at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa needs no introduction. The award winning American steakhouse with its chic, cosmopolitan atmosphere headlines Prime Beef, the highest grade U.S.D.A -- only 2% of all beef is graded prime, required to age a minimum of 4 weeks. While steaks and chops make up the heart of the menu, the resort's Executive Chef Matt Boland and restaurant Chef Maarten Smeets innovated

unparalleled appetizers and extraordinary desserts, which helped the Sunset Grille achieve the Triple AAA's elite four-diamond status – a rare feat for steakhouses.

Sunset Grille well-known as the number one steakhouse in Aruba offers also spa cuisine, for the health conscious visitors, featuring appetizers, salads and a wide array of seafood selections.

The spa cuisine dishes are balanced by enhancing flavors with citrus, spice and

herbs and taste is elevated by marinating, smoking and grilling, Smeets explains.

"We now use many more herbs, vegetables, grains and fibers," adds Boland, "all designed to sustain a healthier life style; and we stay away from saturated fats and refined sugars, as well as use salt sparingly," he informs.

"The Sunset Grille kitchen," Boland reveals, "uses no trans fats, and our guests," he banters, "stay healthy, wealthy and wise with our new and exciting spa cuisine."

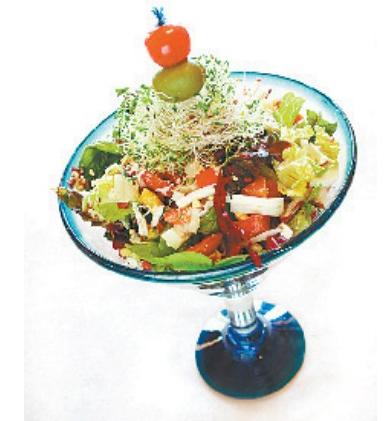
Among the patrons favorite dishes are, the Sunset Grille's famous Chop House Martini Salad, "Shaken not Stirred;" the lobster bisque with a pastry crust, the various cuts of prime beef, the popular Rack of Lamb, Stuffed Quail and the delicious Veal Oscar. The spa cuisine features items such as Tuna Tataki, the Spinach Salad, Chilean Seabass, grilled Swordfish and the Asian style Salmon and Scallops served with the



popular Soba Noodles.

The Sunset Grille always endeavors to exceed guests' expectations by purchasing the very best products available and preparing them in accordance with a combination of "tried and true" as well as cutting edge contemporary methods, Boland explains.

Simply put, the Sunset Grille culinary team buys the best products, and cooks them the best way they know, refusing to cut corners, especially when it comes to buying, aging and



cutting meat. No wonder the readers of Caribbean Travel & Life named it the top restaurant in the Caribbean. □

## The Juggling Fish at Playa Linda Beach Resort



Palm Beach -- The Juggling Fish is designed to stimulate your shopping instincts, as the beautiful store is hard to resist. What you'll find on the

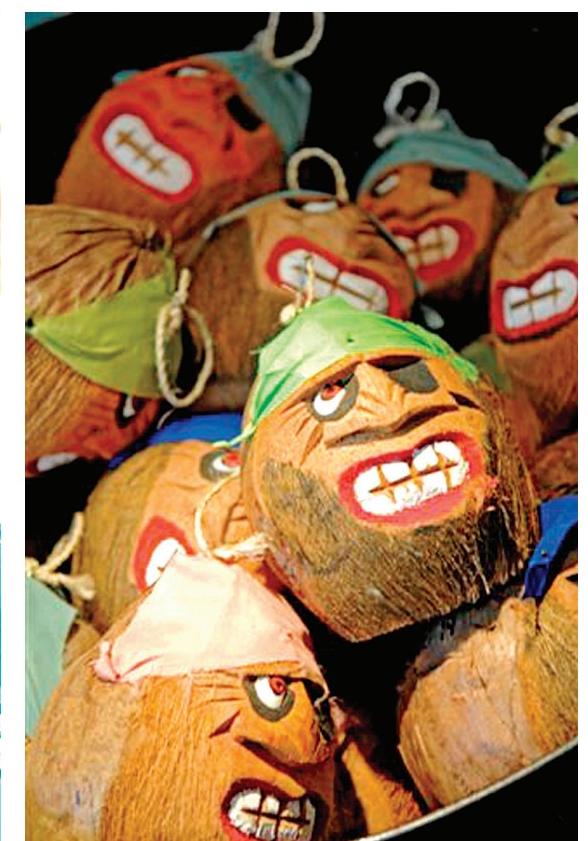


oceanfront boardwalk at Playa Linda is absolutely gorgeous: hand picked gifts, souvenirs, beach and resort wear. It's all on display a few steps from the water. The tastefully arranged store is signature Jodi Tobman-Hagedoorn, the Boston-born owner of two other Juggling Fish stores at the Aruba Beach Club and next to The Olde Molen. You will find a great selection of kid gifts here. In fact an entire inner section is dedicated to gifts with a tropical appeal for babies and toddlers, among them whimsical plush stuffed iguanas, parrots and seahorses.



Moreover, a bonanza of fridge magnets, hand-made silver jewelry, batik beach wraps, throws and hats awaits you.

Gifthunters will also be pleased with the array of scented candles and candleholders. The store offers convenient



barefoot browsing and is located within a short walking distance from the Hyatt Regency and the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort.

The Juggling Fish at Playa Linda fits nicely into that resort's "Life's a Beach" philosophy. Open from 9 a.m.

to 7 p.m. Monday - Saturday and on Sunday, when the rest of the island is at a stand still, the helpful staff at The Juggling Fish is eager to serve you with a smile from 9 a.m. till 6 p.m. Tel.: #586-4999 Email orders@salamanderhol dings.com □

*Beachside Dining in that 'just right' atmosphere*

## Matthew's Beachside Restaurant

EAGLE BEACH – Located at Casa del Mar resort in Eagle Beach, Matthew's is the brain child of Stefan Legger, who owned and operated Rumba Bar & Grill for 6 years. Matthew's redefines the concept of a beachside restaurant, delivering an exquisite blend of fine dining and comfort food with that 'sand on your toes' feeling. The staff is extremely friendly and demonstrate very clearly that they are there for one thing; you.

Also being a very wanted venue for events and weddings, it's very advisable to call and make a reservation, but if you want to just give it a go, no problem. Matthew's has a great bar which will keep you abreast of all the action, whether it's sports on one of their 3 TV's, or what cocktails the bartenders can whip up for you. Besides breakfast, lunch and dinner, Matthew's offers all you can eat spareribs on Tuesdays, Champagne brunch on Sundays and of course their famous daily happy hours with live music at the bar.



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Nobushi Sushi Bar & Asian Cuisine features a variety sashimi, sushi rolls, chicken, fish and meat entrees that will enlighten your senses. Nobushi is located in the Paseo Herencia Mall across the Holiday Inn Resort.



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guests to all the best snorkeling spots in Aruba, including Aruba's most famous snorkel spot – the wreck of the Antilla where you can see yellowtail snapper, angelfish, blue head wrasse and dozens of other tropical fish. Red Sail Sports also offers a Sunset Sail where you can relax with a cocktail and enjoy the spectacular Aruban sunset. A Sunset Sail is truly the best way to watch the sun go down on your Caribbean holiday. To make reservations or for more information call Red Sail Sports at 586-1603, visit your hotel concierge or your Red Sail Sports representative at the Hyatt, Allegro, Marriott and Renaissance Resorts.

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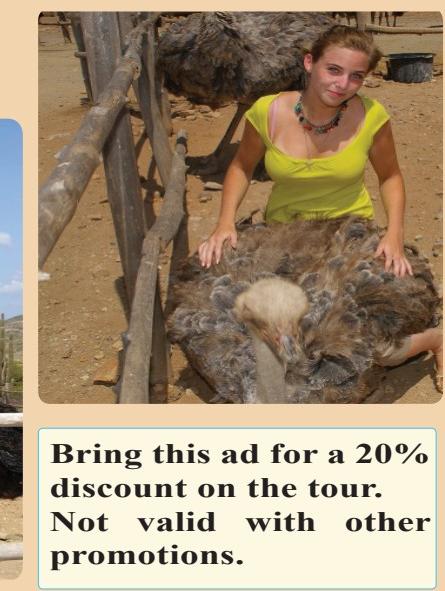
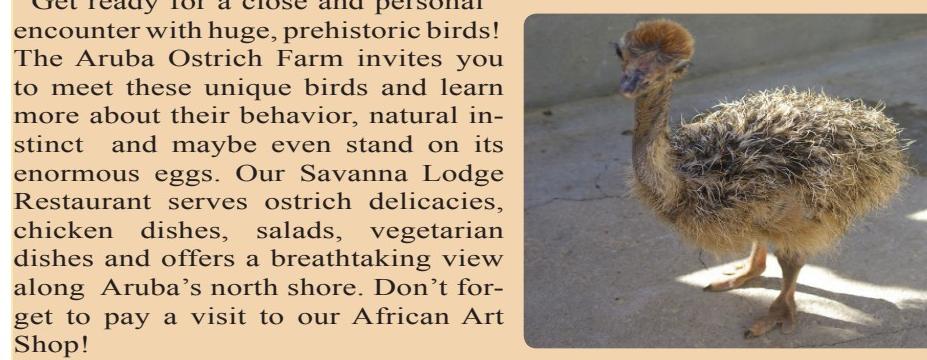
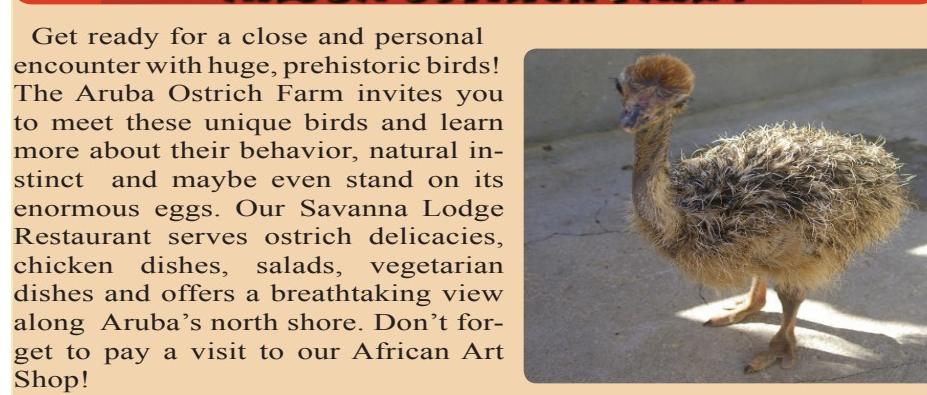
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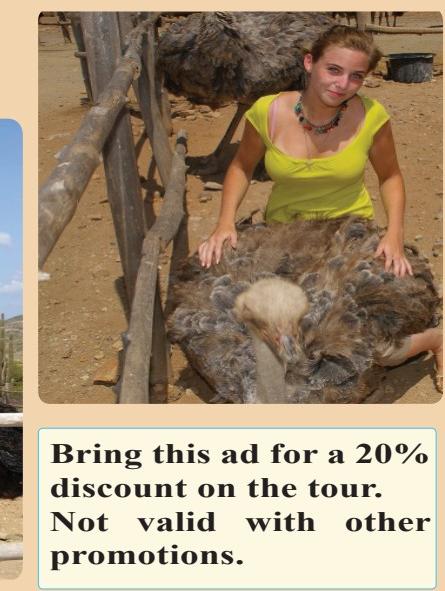
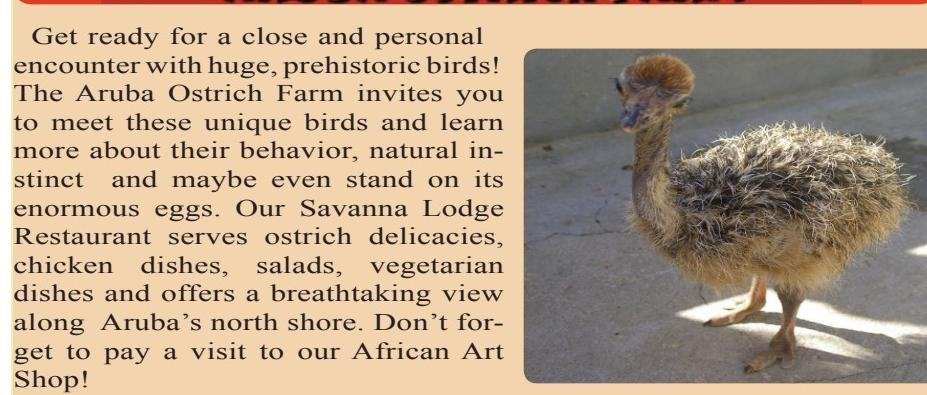
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At the Crystal Theater

# "Havana Dance," is the hottest Cuban show on the island



ORANJESTAD - The elegant Crystal Theater sparkles with all the excitement of Las Vegas as the magnificent "Havana

Dance" explodes on stage with a thrilling mix of Latin & Cuban music, colorful costumes and high energy, contemporary Cuban

dance.

"Havana Dance" is the biggest stage production in the Caribbean, featuring Cuban dancers and entertainers directly from Havana. The show delivers a purely Cuban spectacle, with a cast of 12 female ballerinas, 4 male dancers, 2 singers and 3 acrobats, performing a fresh program accompanied by live Cuban music performed on stage by a genuine Cuban orchestra, consisting of 5 professional Cuban musicians. This live dance AND live music combination as seen in our pictures, is 'first of its kind' on the island.

While the greater part of the "Havana Dance" review enjoys predominantly Cuban flavor, the show is graced with a truly unique Caribbean choreography, and many tropical touches. "Havana Dance" unfolds on a two-tiered stage, with entrances and exits to and off the arena at different heights, which presents a



new visual concept. The custom-designed costumes are sensual, daring, colorful, and luxurious and set "Havana Dance" apart from any other cabaret.

Producer Steve Hudson who enjoyed an unprecedently-successful seven-year run with his previous "Let's Go Latin" review, conceived and created an exciting and much-evolved new must-see spectacle.

Tickets for "Havana Dance" are US\$ 49.- Children under 12 pay US\$25.-

Tickets are available at the theater box office, Renaissance Aruba Resort, and can also be purchased

at the concierge's desk at the Renaissance Aruba Resort. Other ticket vendors include the De Palm Tours and Pelican Adventure Activity Centers at the resorts. A special dinner & show package is also available in conjunction with the L.G. Smith's Steak & Chop House for US\$89.- per person. For additional information and reservations call the Crystal Theatre at Tel.: 583 6000, ext. 6115, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. After 5 p.m., call tel.: 583 6000 ext. 6357. Don't miss an opportunity to be greatly entertained by the sizzle of "Havana Dance." □



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## Medical training program to debut

By MONICA GRAHAM

NEW GLASGOW — Health representatives in Pictou County hope that a new program to help train student doctors will offer benefits for everyone.

The Medical Undergraduate Teaching Program will allow third- and fourth-year medical students to get first-hand experience in family practice and will introduce their medical mentors to fresh ideas, Dr. Nicole Boutilier, vice-president of medical affairs for the Pictou County Health Authority, said Wednesday.

"Both the mentor and the learner learn from each other," Dr. Boutilier said.

Medical students have completed required clinical rotations or clerkships in the area through private arrangements with local physicians, but these arrangements will now be formalized, she said.

Students would initially sit in on patient visits with established family physicians and, with

further training, might conduct interviews, which could help doctors see more patients in the short term, Dr. Boutilier said.

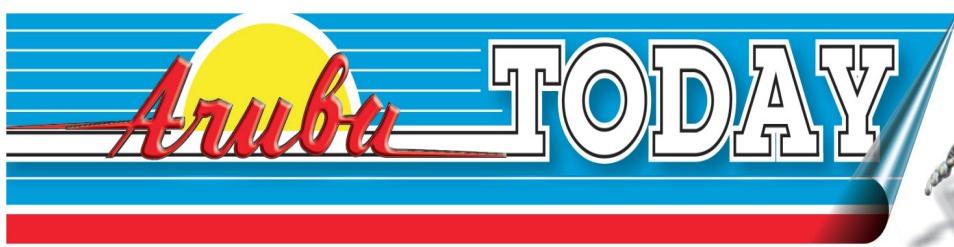
"But the objective is to train them," she said. "It's for quality."

In the long term, the health authority hopes to recruit the students in the areas where they graduate, to fill five upcoming openings for family doctors.

Studies show that students often settle in areas where they complete their clinical rotations, and Dr. Boutilier said she hopes residents will welcome and encourage the students.

"It's a recruitment and retention tool," she said.

The program will bring students from medical schools at Dalhousie University and SABA University in the Dutch Antilles, attended by a number of Nova Scotians, to train with Pictou County family practitioners in what are called primary care collaborative clinics.



THANKS FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION

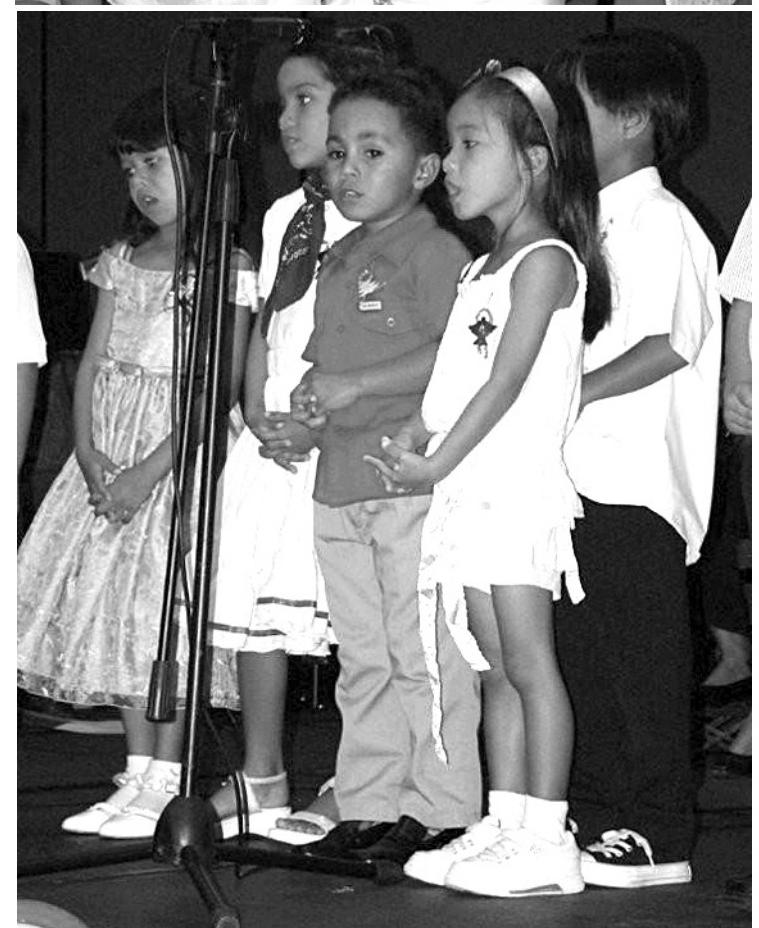
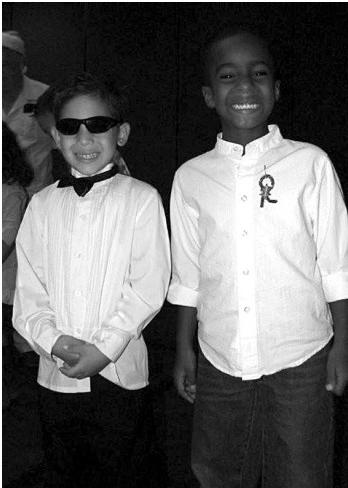
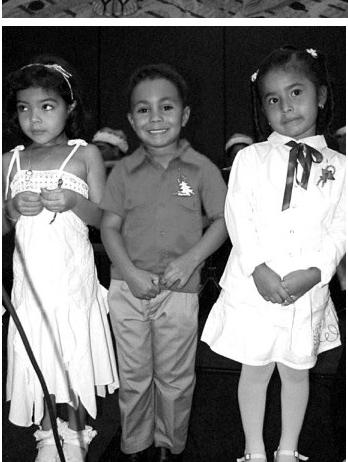
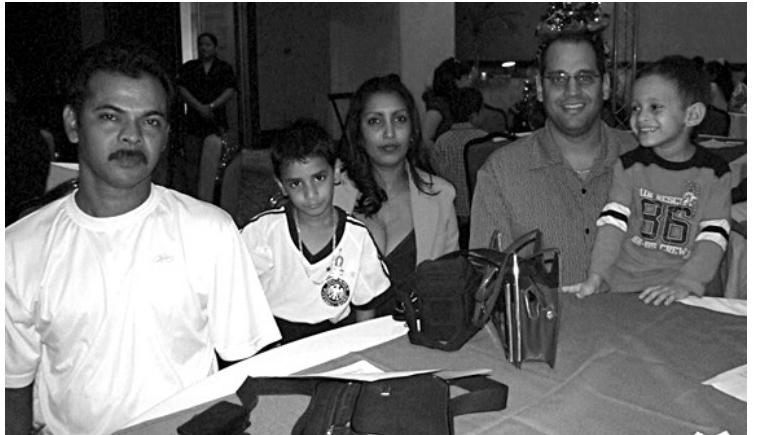
# Agnes Kleuterskol holds year end party at Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa Ballroom



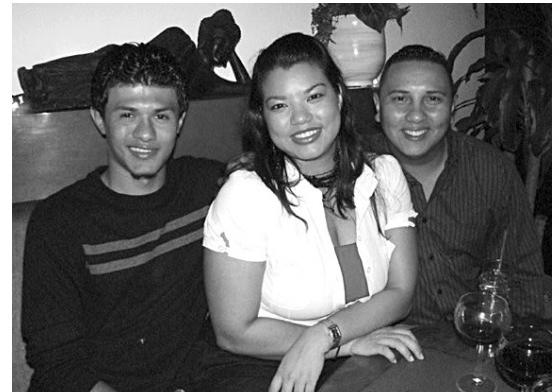
PALM BEACH - School director Emy Davelaar and five dedicated teachers organized a full morning's program

that included school children from five separate school divisions, including parents, live music and a nativity scene

representation in celebration of the upcoming Christmas holidays. The Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa culinary brigade served delicious lunch and wrapped up the most-enjoyable experience for the afternoon. Pictured here children, teachers and parents celebrating the holidays. □



# Aqua Grill staff enjoys holiday party



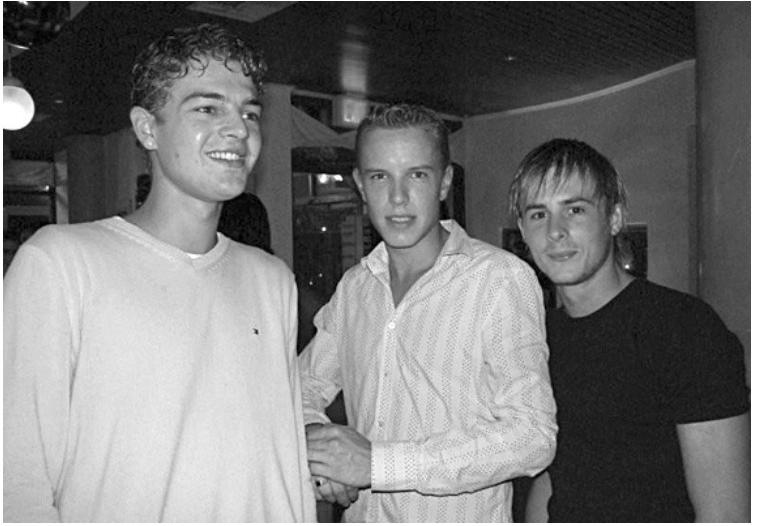
PALM BEACH – The staff members from the critically-acclaimed seafood restaurant in Palm Beach, Aqua Grill, had a chance to catch their breath and enjoy a little team holiday spirit together.

An after-hours event was coordinated this past Friday night so that all staff—from hostesses and servers to bartenders and the kitchen crew—could attend.

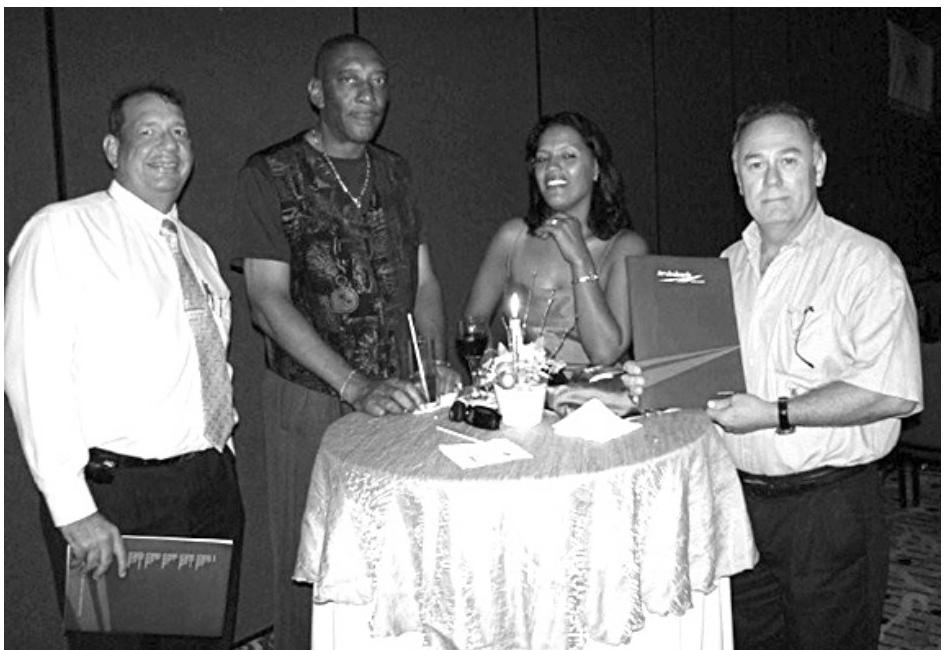
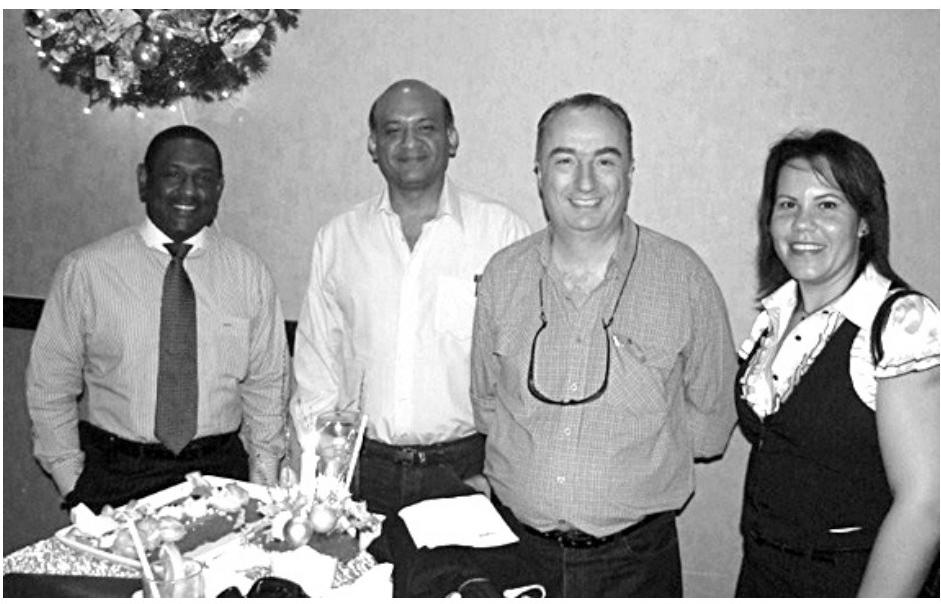
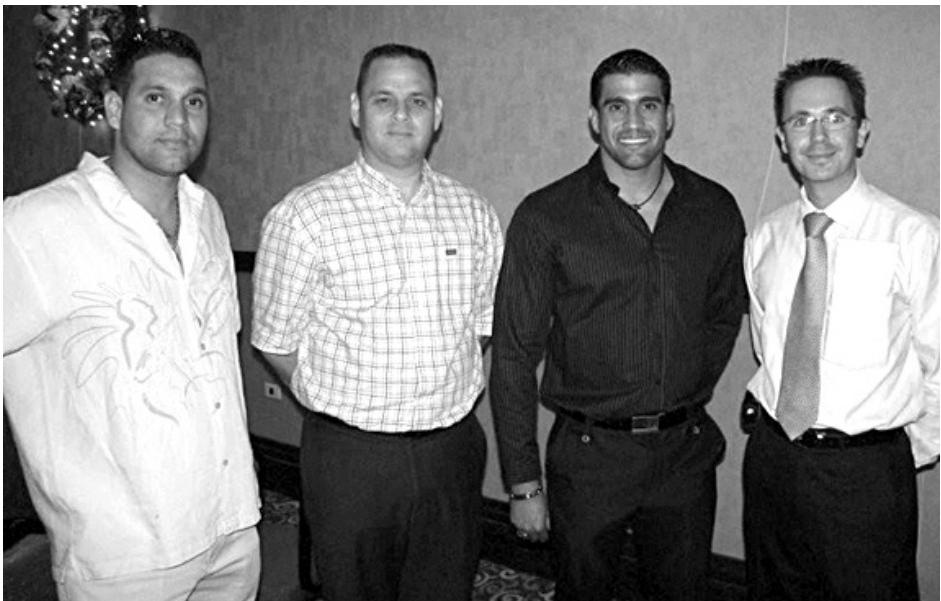
The holiday party was held at Nu Taste located in the heart of downtown. Great food and drinks were enjoyed by all into the wee hours of the morning.

Aqua Grill has been lauded by international critics for its fresh-only approach to seafood.

The restaurant boasts the island's only raw bar, and the glass-enclosed wine vault with more than 100 vintages supports an extensive wine list. But perhaps Aqua Grill's secret ingredient may well be its team of dedicated associates—many of which have been with the restaurant providing warm, friendly island service since it opened its doors more than seven years ago. □



# Aruba Bank and WTS host an informative seminar at the Radisson



PALM BEACH - Aruba Bank in conjunction with WTS tax consultants featured some expert speakers in a seminar designed to inform and educate clients regarding the administration of a pension plan as an effective tax planning tool. The seminar recommended planning a

pension plan as a means of decreasing tax burdens and keeping the cash flow in companies. WTS and the Aruba Bank invited clients for the interesting seminar followed by a cocktail party expertly catered by the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa Culinary Team.□

*A Holiday Melange in terrific style*

## Magic surrounds the official opening of Fernando Mansur's Maison Madruga



ORANJESTAD - Fernando Mansur is Aruba's absolute leader when it comes to style and taste. He proved that

abundantly last Saturday during the official opening of his Maison Madruga. A magical evening entranced

his guests, who were seated in the superbly decorated 'sala grandi' of the Mansur house at Schotlandstraat 4, Eagle. Dutch soprano Nicole van Eer took everyone's breath away with her performance of musical themes from around the world; dinner by Taste of Belgium Catering was exquisite and DJ Mike Willer, music master of our island, took care of any musical cravings Fernando and his guests might have had.

The evening started with cocktails in the front garden. There, Nicole van Eer took



everyone's breath away: dressed in a red, 9-foot long evening gown, which flowed down across a small stage she sang Nessun Dorma in her clear voice that tugs at your heart. During the remainder of the evening, Nicole went through many dress changes, but her red dress will stand out in everyone's memory for sure.

The soprano performed Christmas songs, Broadway songs and the wonderful finale Canto Alla Vita and Harem, both of which showcased several gorgeous dancers.

Nicole van Eer has a wonderful career behind her: she has performed in opera before she switched to musicals such as the West Side Story, Cats and Phantom of the Opera, just to name a few hits.

But then she fell in love with an Aruban man and she has been living here for the past few years. Her voice, however, has not retired from the stage at all, as she proved irrevocably.

"That such a strong, true and loud voice can come from such a slight lady is amazing," said Fernando, emcee of the evening.

As the candles flickered, the

conversation of the guests flowed easily around the carpaccio of smoked duck breast, Christmas ham, roast beef and chicken roulade before they were presented with tiramisu cake and assorted fresh tropical fruit. Taste of Belgium's Catering had outdone itself for this special event!

Thanking all those present for sharing the important evening with him, Fernando also talked about his dream, Maison Madruga, becoming reality. "Maison Madruga provides an upscale, magical place where memorable evenings will be spent," he said.

It is true, the house has to be seen to be believed. It is a gem, filled with priceless pieces of antiques and art and it is the perfect setting for intimate weddings, luxurious cocktail parties or the most unforgettable marriage proposals or wedding anniversaries ever. For those who are in the planning stages of events, mail Fernando at mosaic@setarnet.aw and be amazed.

Rest us to wish Fernando and his team all the best for his Maison Madruga: a magical place has opened its doors. □

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*Introducing a new tapas menu*

# Casa Tua's delicacies now found in Oranjestad

*Also open for lunch*



PALM BEACH - The famous Casa Tua restaurant in Palm Beach in the Arawak Gardens now has a twin Casa Tua in Downtown Oranjestad upstairs in the Aventura Mall overlooking the Daniel Leo Plaza. This restaurant presents a fresh approach to dining in Aruba. The name says it all "Casa Tua" meaning "Your Home" in Italian and you are welcome tonight to delight in the savory hot and cold tapas.

Casa Tua boasts the unique opportunity to sample the "Pata Negra" which is "Jamon Iberico", considered the absolute

highest quality ham. The flavor and texture of the ham is the only one of its kind and the experience of the chef carving your personal slice is irreplaceable.

The menu varies with a wide array of Italian dishes including a Sicilian-style thin crust pizza dripping with cheese, fresh-made tomato sauce and a variety of toppings in the meat, seafood and veggie categories.

The menu doesn't stop there as Casa Tua features incredible appetizers including shrimp bruschetta, fresh marinated seafood, escargots, amazing

salads, homemade soups starting at \$6 and authentic Italian lasagnas & pastas starting at just \$14. The staff at this popular eatery has set the standard on the island for the term "great service" not only with your dinning pleasure, but recognized as 'the' professionals in assisting guests with the perfect cocktail, paired wine or other beverages. After just one dinner at Casa Tua, you'll know your home in this family owned eatery. Victor Nataf and his sons Daveed and Gregory are always there to welcome you with the rest of



their staff. Gregory spends most of his time in the kitchen as the head chef repeating the recipes and perfect preparations passed to him from his uncle and three siblings who are renowned for their Mediterranean flair throughout France.

Of course we saved the best for last as no one does an ending better than Casa Tua with their dreamy Tiramisu, or Profiteroles au Chocolat Chaud.

The best part about such a good ending is that it guarantees you'll be back for more...

Opening Hours: 11:00 AM - 11:00PM

For more information or reservations please call Tel: (297) 588-5695. □



Sliced Ibérico ham by Jamones Fermín.

*Highly recommended!*

## "Fishes and More" leads the way in seafood dining

PALM BEACH - Fishes and More Restaurant opened up in the Arawak Gardens just 3 and

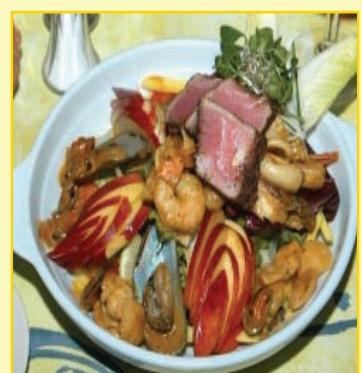
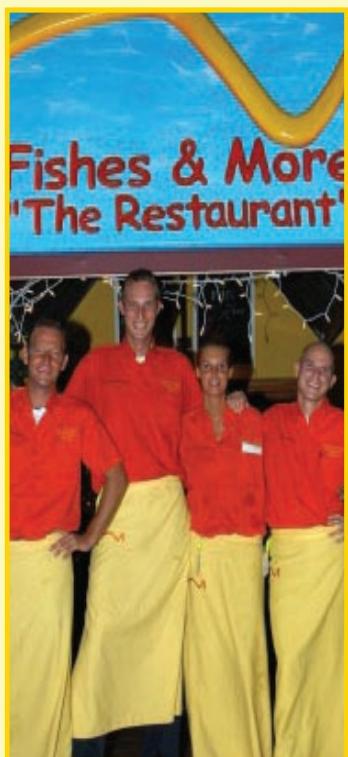
consider yourself addicted. The owners Jeroen Kuling and Hans Heijink together with the

ryone to enjoy. The ambiance at the restaurant is out of this world, whether dinning inside in the relaxed air-conditioned dinning room or outside on the terrace to enjoy the tropical breeze and daily live music.

Most guests come in early for the **daily fresh catches**, such as Red snapper, grouper, mahi mahi, wahoo and tuna. Check with the server to find out about the Catch of the day.

The chef will be more than happy to prepare your fish the way you like it best: grilled, deep-fried, pan-fried or the chef's choice.

**Every Wednesday, seafood specials are prepared** depending on what the Fishermen bring in fresh out of the water that afternoon. These specials usually include fresh Caribbean lobster and pounds of peeled shrimps.



a half years ago and has been a great success since day one.

Word on the street is that once you eat at Fishes and More,

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## BON DIA

## Aruba

## TODAY

On Top Of The News

Email: news@arubatoday.com

Tuesday, December 16, 2008



President-elect Barack Obama smiles at a press conference in Chicago, Monday, Dec. 15, 2008.

Associated Press

## Obama: Probe shows no contact in Ill. gov. scandal

Read Page B4

## Caroline Kennedy wants Senate seat

ALBANY, New York (AP) - Caroline Kennedy told New York's governor on Monday that she's interested in the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Hillary Rodham Clinton, making her the highest-profile candidate to express a desire for the job.

Democratic Gov. David Paterson will choose the replacement.

"She told me she was interested in the position," Paterson said. "It's not a campaign. She'd like at some point to sit down."

Stefan Friedman, the spokesman for Kennedy, slain President John F. Kennedy's daughter, declined to comment.

Clinton is expected to be confirmed as President-elect Barack Obama's secretary of state.

At an afternoon news conference to discuss last week's paralyzing ice storm, New York's senior senator, Charles Schumer, said he has also talked to Caroline Kennedy about the job.

"And she's clearly interested," he said.

Kennedy's uncle, the late Robert F. Kennedy, once held the Senate seat she wants. Paterson has sole authority to name a replacement for Clinton, who was first elected in 2000 and re-elected by a wide margin in 2006.

Over the past week, Kennedy, who lives in Manhattan, has reached out to several prominent New York Democrats to tell them of her interest in the Senate seat.

"I think she's thought about it a long time," Joel Klein, chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, said of a conversation

he had with Kennedy on Monday. He said the campaigning she did for Obama this year helped acquaint her with the gritty rituals of retail politics.

"She's a highly determined woman and she's clearly been thinking about her life and how to make an effective contribution," Klein said. "Everyone knows Caroline, and everyone has a great historical respect for the Kennedy family." Other Democrats who appear to be on Paterson's short list include New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, the son of former Gov. Mario Cuomo, who won't say publicly whether he's interested.

One of the early front-runners, Rep. Nydia Velazquez of Brooklyn, took herself out of the running Friday.

Paterson will appoint someone to fill Clinton's seat for two years if she is confirmed as secretary of state. Republicans wasted no time in criticizing Kennedy as unqualified for the job and unfamiliar with the state.

"If anything, it makes me more determined to run," said Rep. Peter King, a Long Island Republican who has already expressed his interest in the seat.

"As far as record of achievement, I strongly believe that I'm much more qualified, much more experienced, and have an independent record," King said. "Nothing against Caroline Kennedy, but I don't think anyone has a right to a seat."

The Rev. Al Sharpton, a prominent civil rights activist, said Kennedy called him Monday. □

## Family: Shoe thrower hates both US, Iran role



An Iraqi man throws a shoe at President George W. Bush during a new conference with Iraq Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki on Sunday, Dec. 14, 2008, in Baghdad. A man threw two shoes at Bush, one after another, during the news conference. Bush ducked both throws, and neither man was hit.

Associated Press

By ROBERT H. REID

Associated Press Writer

BAGHDAD (AP) - The Iraqi TV reporter who hurled his shoes at George W. Bush was kidnapped once by militants and, separately, detained briefly by the U.S. military - a story of getting hit from all sides that is bitterly familiar to many Iraqis.

Continued on Page B6



In this Sunday Feb. 3, 2008 file photo, Caroline Kennedy speaks at a Get Out The Vote event for then Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill. at Pauley Pavilion on the UCLA campus in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

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# Obama announces energy and environment team



U.S. President-elect Barack Obama (2nd L) looks on as Steven Chu, director of Lawrence Berkeley National Lab, speaks after being introduced as Obama's Energy Secretary during a news conference in Chicago, December 15, 2008. Obama also named former Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) chief Carol Browner (R) to head a new council to coordinate White House energy, climate and environment policies, and Lisa Jackson (2nd R), chief of staff for New Jersey's governor, to run the EPA.

*Reuters Photo*

WASHINGTON (AP) - President-elect Barack Obama on Monday named an environmental and energy team that he said signaled his determination to tackle global warming quickly and develop alternative forms of energy. He

vowed to "move beyond our oil addiction and create a new hybrid economy."

Obama selected Nobel-prize winning physicist Steven Chu as energy secretary and Carol Browner, a confidante of former Vice President Al Gore,

to lead a White House council on energy and climate. Browner headed the Environmental Protection Agency in the Clinton administration.

Chu is director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory in Berkeley, California, and is a leading advocate of reducing greenhouse gases by developing new energy sources.

"His appointment should send a signal to all that my administration will value science. We will make decisions based on the facts, and we understand that facts demand bold action," Obama said.

Obama also announced his choice of Lisa Jackson, former head of New Jersey's environmental agency, as EPA administrator.

"We can spark the dynamism of our economy through a long-term investment in renewable energy that will give life to new businesses and industries with good jobs that pay well and can't be outsourced," he said.

"We'll make public buildings more efficient, modernize our

electricity grid, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while protecting and preserving our natural resources. We must also recognize that the solution to global climate change must be global."

Separately, an Obama transition official said Colorado Sen. Ken Salazar will be named Interior Secretary later this week, rounding out the environment and energy team.

Salazar is a first-term Colorado Senator who has established a name for himself on public lands and energy resources issues. He headed the Colorado Natural Resources Department from 1990 through 1994. The Interior Department has broad oversight over U.S. energy resources and environment. It oversees oil and gas drilling on public lands and manages U.S. parks and wildlife refuges.

Sources with knowledge of the decision also said that Obama has chosen Chicago schools chief Arne Duncan to serve as education secretary.

Duncan has run the third-

biggest U.S. school district for the past seven years, focused on improving struggling schools, closing those that fail, and getting better teachers.

Obama has avoided taking sides in a debate between reform advocates and teachers' unions, and the choice of Duncan may please the competing factions. Teachers' unions wanted an advocate for their members, while reform advocates want teachers and schools held accountable.

Also Monday, the 538 Americans who voted in state capitols across the United States elected Obama president. The voting by the electors was a largely ceremonial procedure, but one mandated by the Constitution. Obama defeated Republican Sen. John McCain in the Nov. 4 election, but still the presidency is not his officially.

Under the convoluted electoral system devised by the drafters of the U.S. Constitution 220 years ago, Obama's election will become official only on Jan. 6, in Washington. □

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# For tax cheats, meltdown prompts amnesty offers



Bernard L. Madoff, chairman of Madoff Investment Securities is seen on his Manhattan trading floor in this photo taken Dec. 30, 1999 in New York. The former Nasdaq stock market chairman was arrested on a securities fraud charge Thursday, Dec. 11, 2008, accused of running a phony investment business that lost at least \$50 billion and amounted to nothing more than a 'giant Ponzi scheme.'

*Associated Press*

By GLEN JOHNSON

Associated Press Writer

BOSTON — Turns out it's a pretty good time to be a tax cheat.

Desperate to bring in revenue in the middle of a recession, states across the country are adopting tax amnesty programs, offering to let people pay their past-due tax bills with little or no penalties or interest.

"Something is better than nothing," said Dino DiCianno, executive director of the Nevada Taxation Department. DiCianno said Nevada gave up more than \$14 million in penalties and interest to collect nearly \$41 million between July and October.

Oklahoma, like Nevada, generated about twice as much as it expected from its offer of amnesty, raising \$82 million through its 90-day Clean Slate program for businesses and individuals.

New York has a program under way, and Connecticut and Massachusetts are drawing up theirs. California debated one before rejecting it in favor of stiffer penalties. Delaware's incoming governor campaigned on the idea. A similar program is being considered for Louisiana when its lawmakers return in April. State after state is facing a disastrous drop-off in tax revenue because of the stock market collapse and the recession. Many states have already cut their budgets and started laying off employees. "Anything you can do to speed up cash flow is cheaper than your alternatives, like borrowing," said Verenda Smith, spokeswoman for the Federation of Tax Administrators.

Many states are reluctant to offer amnesty, arguing that its rewards cheaters, discourages honest taxpayers and poaches

revenue the states will collect in the future — especially as they improve the databases they use to catch delinquents. They worry, too, that people will hold back on their taxes and simply wait for the next amnesty.

"If the attitude is we're going to hand out get-out-of-jail-free cards, people's attitudes can change," said Paul Warren of the California Legislative Analyst's Office. "You can have a breakdown in compliance."

An Oklahoma City lawyer challenged his state's amnesty program all the way to the state Supreme Court, arguing that the Oklahoma Constitution prohibits forgiving a state debt. The court rejected his claim in a one-sentence ruling.

"It is a slap in the face to all law-abiding Oklahomans who pay their taxes as required by law," said lawyer Jerry F. Fent.

New York, which has a \$1.5 billion deficit, began a limited amnesty last January that covers income, corporate and sales taxes. The state has collected \$11 million so far and hopes to take in \$30 million.

Connecticut Gov. Jodi Rell has warned that the state faces nearly \$6 billion in deficits over the next two fiscal years. The state is hoping to generate \$40 million by instituting a 56-day tax amnesty program next spring.

It will let taxpayers pay their late state taxes without penalty, and with a 25 percent reduction in interest.

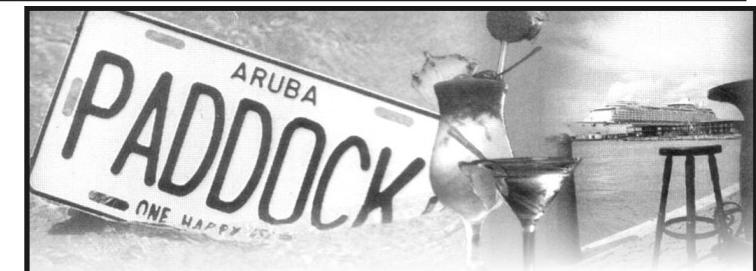
"States are trying to reach for every tool in the toolbox right now," said Connecticut Senate President Pro Tem Don Williams. □

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# Obama: Probe shows no contact in Ill. gov. scandal



**Illinois Speaker of the House Michael Madigan, D-Chicago, left, and Rep. Jack Franks, D-Woodstock, right, confer while on the House floor during session at the Illinois State Capitol in Springfield, Ill., Monday, Dec. 15, 2008, as lawmakers take the first step toward possibly impeaching embattled Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich.**

*Associated Press*

SPRINGFIELD, Illinois (AP) - President-elect Barack Obama said Monday that an internal investigation shows his staff had no involvement in the corruption scandal enveloping Illinois' governor, as lawmakers took the first step toward removing the state's scandal-plagued leader from office. Responding to the controversy sparked by the arrest of Gov. Rod Blagojevich's alleged attempt to sell Obama's vacant Senate seat, the president-elect pledged to make the review public, but said he was holding off because prosecutors asked for a delay. U.S. Attorney Patrick Fitzgerald released a statement confirming the request.

At a press conference in Washington to announce his new environmental team, Obama called the corruption charges against the governor an "appalling set of circumstances,"

but said they had nothing to do with his own office.

There are no suggestions that Obama or his aides were involved in the alleged sale of his seat, but the scandal could prove to be a headache for him as he prepares to take over the presidency on Jan. 20.

As governor, Blagojevich has sole authority to appoint a replacement, although fellow Democrats have demanded he refrain from doing so. Obama resigned his Senate seat last month.

Illinois lawmakers took the first step toward removing Blagojevich from office on Monday, as state House Speaker Michael Madigan appointed a bipartisan committee to review potential impeachment proceedings. If Blagojevich were impeached, he would be replaced by Lt. Gov. Patrick Quinn, who urged the governor

to resign.

"We're going to proceed with all due speed, but we're going to make sure that what we do is done correctly," said Madigan, a Chicago Democrat and former co-chairman of Blagojevich's re-election campaign who has become one of the governor's fiercest critics.

"I've had a chance to get to know Mr. Blagojevich over six years, so I was not surprised," Madigan said of the corruption charges that allege the governor tried to put Obama's seat up for auction. A Blagojevich spokesman said the governor has not ruled out signing a bill to hold a special election to fill the seat. That was the first hint the embattled governor may loosen his grip on the position, though opponents of a special election say it would be too expensive, costing between \$30 million and \$50 million.

Blagojevich was arrested Tuesday after being under federal investigation for three years. He is also accused of shaking down businesses seeking state deals and scheming to get Chicago Tribune editorial writers fired over their calls for his impeachment.

On Monday, he tried to appear gubernatorial by signing a bill giving tax credits to Hollywood movie studios who film in Illinois. But he also appeared to be digging in for the legal and professional battles ahead.

There were increasing signs Blagojevich would be represented by defense attorney Ed Genson, one of Chicago's best-known lawyers, whose previous clients have included

newspaper baron Conrad Black and R&B singer R. Kelly.

The governor was seen at the offices of the tough, street-smart attorney.

Madigan said the impeachment committee's review will include the criminal charges against Blagojevich as well as a long list of other possible wrongdoing during his six years in office: abuse of power, taking action without legal authority, ignoring state laws and defying lawful requests for information from the state's lawmakers in the General Assembly.

Madigan often has clashed with Blagojevich, and his office produced a memo this year outlining all the arguments legislative candidates could make in favor of impeachment. The state constitution gives lawmakers broad authority to impeach a governor. The House of Representatives would decide whether to file charges against the governor, and the Senate would ultimately rule on them. Madigan's daughter, Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan, has asked the state Supreme Court to remove Blagojevich, claiming he is unfit to serve.

Madigan said Sunday she expects word on whether the court will hear her request "probably just in a few days." She is considered one of the top Democratic candidates for governor in 2010.

Controversy has swirled around Obama and his incoming White House chief of staff, Rep. Rahm Emanuel, following Blagojevich's arrest. The president-elect sidestepped the question Monday when asked

whether Emanuel had spoken with aides to the governor.

He called the probe by his incoming White House counsel Gregory Craig complete and thorough, but did not say which of his aides Craig interviewed, whether any of them was under oath at the time, or any other details.

Obama held his news conference shortly after his transition office released a statement by spokesman Dan Pfeiffer saying the internal review had found no wrongdoing. Like the president-elect, the statement left several issues uncovered.

It did not say whether Emanuel was heard on a wiretap providing the governor's top aide with a list of names that the president-elect favored.

Nor did it say who, if anyone, on Obama transition's team had made contact with the governor or his aides concerning a replacement for Obama.

In recent days, Obama's staff has declined to respond even to basic questions about the Blagojevich review, like how long it would take, who was leading it and what issues were explored.

Two people who have been briefed on the investigation had told The Associated Press that Emanuel is not a target of the probe. They spoke on condition of anonymity because the criminal investigation is ongoing. One is a person close to Emanuel, who said he has been told by investigators that he's not a subject of their probe.

Blagojevich himself, in taped conversations cited by prosecutors, suggested Obama wouldn't be helpful to him and called him a vulgar term. Even if the governor were to appoint a candidate favored by the Obama team, Blagojevich said, "they're not willing to give me anything except appreciation." Obama selected Nobel-prize winning physicist Steven Chu as energy secretary and Carol Browner, a confidante of former Vice President Al Gore, to lead a White House council on energy and climate. □

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# Roof collapses in midst of SoCal storm; 7 injured

LOS ANGELES – A powerful storm plowed through California on Monday, producing heavy rain that collapsed a school roof and forced hundreds to flee homes in an area devastated by recent wildfires.

Power failures caused by the weather blacked out about 20,000 homes and businesses around the state. Two traffic deaths were linked to the storm.

At higher elevations, heavy snow in a mountain pass east of Los Angeles closed the main route connecting Las Vegas to Southern California. North of the city, the main route to San Francisco was snarled by snow that forced the state Highway Patrol to shepherd motorists over another pass in caravans.

The rain apparently collapsed the roof of a classroom at the North Orange County Regional Occupational Program building in Anaheim. Seven people were taken to a hospital, said police Sgt. Rick Martinez. Their conditions were not immediately available.

Roughly 150 students were at the center, which prepares high school students and adults for medical occupations, said spokeswoman Pat Hansmeyer. Only three of the students were minors, and they were not injured, she said.

Yorba Linda, where 100 homes were lost to a wildfire last month, hundreds of homes in canyon areas on the east end of town were ordered evacuated Monday morning because of the threat of mudslides. Residents had been advised to leave as early as Sunday night, and an evacuation center was opened.

"It is mandatory now, unknown duration," said Brea police Lt. Jim Tibbetts.

The wildfires had stripped hillsides of vegetation. Muddy runoff on some roads was reported near midday.

The storm was part of the same weather system that brought heavy snow to Portland, Ore., on Sunday, snarling traffic and delaying airline flights, said Steven Van Horn, a National Weather Service meteorologist.

In Northern California, about 8 inches of heavy snow brought down tree limbs on power lines, blacking out more than 11,000 customers in the Grass Valley area, Pacific Gas & Electric spokesman Paul Moreno said.

Power failures also hit 5,000 Los Angeles Department of Water and Power customers and 4,000 Southern California Edison customers, utility officials said.

Rainfall totals for Southern California on Monday morning ranged from more than 1 inch at Moorpark to more than 2 inches at the Gibraltar Dam in Santa Barbara County. Snow fell at areas above 3,000 feet. The Lockwood Valley in the mountains of Ventura County had 8 inches by midmorning. The storm was expected to linger in the area through Wednesday, Van Horn said, although showers were expected to be scattered and lighter on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Among the deaths linked to the storm, a California Highway Patrol officer directing traffic



**Victor Lopez of Ontario, Calif., calls for help from the top of his car early Monday, Dec. 15, 2008, after his car stalled while trying to cross a flooded intersection in Ontario, Calif. A powerful storm in California snarled roads, caused two traffic fatalities, collapsed the roof of an occupational school and forced hundreds of people to flee their homes in a suburb devastated by wildfire just last month.**

*Associated Press*

around a vehicle that wrecked in the rain in Hacienda Heights, east of Los Angeles, was hit by another car that went out of control, said patrol Officer Terry Liu.

In the San Diego area, one

person was killed when an armored truck slid off a wet highway and rolled down an embankment. □

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In this image from APTN video, a man throws a shoe at President George W. Bush during a news conference with Iraq Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki on Sunday, Dec. 14, 2008, in Baghdad. The man threw two shoes at Bush, one after another. Bush ducked both throws, and neither man was hit.

#### SHOE THROWER

*Continued from Page B1*

Over time, Muntadhar al-Zeidi, a 28-year-old unmarried Shiite, came to hate both the U.S.

*Associated Press*

military occupation and Iran's interference in Iraq, his family told The Associated Press on Monday.

Al-Zeidi's act of defiance

Sunday transformed an obscure reporter from a minor TV station into a national hero to many Iraqis fed up with the nearly six-year U.S. presence here, but also fearful that their country will fall under Iran's influence once the Americans leave.

Several thousand people demonstrated in Baghdad and other cities to demand al-Zeidi's release. The attack was the talk of the town in coffee shops, business offices and even schools \_ and a subject across much of the Arab world.

Al-Zeidi was held Monday in Iraqi custody for investigation and could face charges of insulting a foreign leader and the Iraqi prime minister, who was standing next to Bush.

Conviction carries a sentence of up to two years in prison or a small fine \_ although it's unlikely he would face the maximum penalty given his newfound cult status in the Arab world.

Bush ducked and was not hit or injured in the attack, and Iraqi security guards wrestled al-Zeidi to the ground immediately after he tossed his shoes. White House press secretary Dana Perino suffered an eye injury when she was hit in the face with a microphone during the melee.

A day after the incident, al-Zeidi's three brothers and one sister gathered in al-Zeidi's simple, one-bedroom apartment in west Baghdad. The home was decorated with a poster of Latin American revolutionary leader Che Guevara, who is widely lionized in the Middle East.

Family members expressed bewilderment over al-Zeidi's action and concern about his treatment in Iraqi custody. But they also expressed pride over his defiance of an American president who many Iraqis believe has destroyed their country.

"I swear to Allah, he is a hero," said his sister, who goes by the nickname Umm Firas, as she watched a replay of her brother's attack on an Arabic satellite station. "May Allah protect him."

The family insisted that al-Zeidi's action was spontaneous \_ perhaps motivated by the political turmoil that their brother had reported on, plus his personal brushes with violence and the threat of death that millions of Iraqis face daily.

Al-Zeidi joined Al-Baghdadia television in September 2005 after graduating from Baghdad University with a degree in communications. Two years later, he was seized by gunmen while on an assignment in a Sunni district of north Baghdad.

He was freed unharmed three days later after Iraqi television stations broadcast appeals for his release. At the time, al-Zeidi told reporters he did not know who kidnapped him or why, but his family blamed al-Qaida and said no ransom was paid. In January he was taken again, this time arrested by American soldiers who searched his apartment building, his brother, Dhirgham, said. He was released the next day with an apology, the brother said.

Those experiences helped mold a deep resentment of both the U.S. military's presence here and Iran's pervasive influence over Iraq's cleric-dominated Shiite community, according to his family.

"He hates the American material occupation as much as he hates the Iranian moral occupation," Dhirgham said, alluding to the influence of pro-Iranian Shiite clerics in political and social life. "As for Iran, he considers the regime to be the other side of the American coin."

That's a view widely held among Iraqis \_ including many Shiites \_ who believe the Americans and the Iranians have been fighting a proxy war in their country through Tehran's alleged links to Shiite extremists.

Al-Zeidi may have also been motivated by what a colleague described as a boastful, showoff personality.

"He was very boastful, arrogant and always showing off," said Zanko Ahmed, a Kurdish journalist who attended a journalism training course with al-Zeidi in Lebanon.

"He tried to raise topics to show that nobody is as smart as he is."

Ahmed recalled that al-Zeidi spoke glowingly of anti-American cleric Muqtada al-Sadr, whose followers organized protests Monday to demand his release.

"Regrettably, he didn't learn anything from the course in Lebanon, where we were taught ethics of journalism and how to be detached and neutral," Ahmed said. □

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PG-13	THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	NEW
	daily: 5:15 7:35 9:55 matinee: 12:35 2:55 late show: 12:20	
R	SEX DRIVE	NEW
	daily: 5:25 7:50 10:05 matinee: 12:40 3:05 late show: 12:30	
PG	BOLT	
	daily: 4:10 6:10 8:20 10:20 matinee: 12:00 2:10 late show: 12:25	
PG-13	AUSTRALIA	
	daily: 6:10 9:05 matinee: 12:05 3:10 late show: 12:05	
PG-13	NICK & NORAH'S INFINITE PLAYLIST	
	daily: 10:10 matinee: late show: 12:15	
PG	MADAGASCAR 2	
	daily: 4:05 6:10 8:05 matinee: 12:05 2:05 late show:	
PG-13	JAMES BOND QUANTUM OF SOLACE	
	daily: 5:30 7:40 10:00 matinee: 1:00 3:15 late show: 12:10	

### AT PASEO HERENCIA

PG-13	THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL	NEW
	daily: 5:25 7:45 10:05 matinee: 12:45 3:05 late show: 12:25	
PG-13	THE SECRET LIFE OF BEES	NEW
	daily: 5:10 7:30 9:50 matinee: 12:30 2:50 late show: 12:10	
PG	BOLT	
	daily: 4:15 6:20 8:30 10:35 matinee: 12:05 2:10 late show: 12:40	
PG-13	AUSTRALIA	
	daily: 6:05 9:10 matinee: 12:00 3:00 late show: 12:15	
R	BODIES OF LIES	
	daily: 5:00 7:40 10:00 matinee: 11:50 2:25 late show: 12:35	
PG-13	JAMES BOND QUANTUM OF SOLACE	
	daily: 8:00 10:10 matinee: late show: 12:30	
PG	MADAGASCAR 2	
	daily: 4:00 6:00 matinee: 11:55 2:00 late show:	

### DRIVE-IN December 11 – December 14

PG-13	THE BOY IN THE STRIPED PAJAMAS	
	Thursday: 8:00 Friday: 8:00 & 10:30	
PG-13	DOUBT	
	Saturday: 8:00 & 10:30 Sunday: 8:00	

Matinee: sat & sun | Late show: Fri & Sat

By MARK STEVENSON

*Associated Press Writer*

MEXICO CITY (AP) - A U.S. anti-kidnapping expert was abducted by gunmen in northern Mexico last week, a sign of just how bold this nation's kidnapping gangs have become. U.S. security consultant Felix Batista was in Saltillo in Coahuila state to offer advice on how to confront abductions for ransom when he himself was seized, local authorities said.

Unknown assailants grabbed him on Dec. 10, said Charlie LeBlanc, the president of the Houston, Texas-based security firm ASI Global LLC., where Batista is a consultant. "We have notified the FBI and Mexican authorities, and they are working on the case," LeBlanc said Monday. "What we are doing is we're offering our support to the family and hoping for the best." The U.S. Embassy in Mexico City said it would not comment on the case, and LeBlanc

declined to say whether a ransom demand had been received.

LeBlanc said Batista had his own security business and that "he was in Mexico for business that wasn't associated with our company."

"Part of that could be or may involve negotiations with kidnappers," LeBlanc said. ASI Global's Web site advertises "kidnap and ransom response" and says the company has worked for major insurance companies.

A woman who answered a phone number listed under Batista's name in Miami, Florida said she did not wish to comment on the case.

Batista was frequently cited as an anti-kidnapping expert at conferences and in the press.

A story in the December issue of the trade magazine Security Management describes how Batista organized relatives' response to a kidnapping in Mexico, even cooking the family at times. □

# US anti-kidnapping expert kidnapped in Mexico

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## Thai opposition leader becomes prime minister

By AMBIKA AHUJA

Associated Press Writer

BANGKOK, Thailand (AP) - Thailand's parliament has chosen the country's Oxford-educated opposition leader as prime minister, capping six months of violent anti-government protests that included a weeklong takeover of Bangkok's two airports.

The selection Monday of Abhisit Vejjajiva marks the first time in eight years that a civilian government will be led by an opponent of exiled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, who has loomed over Thai politics since he was ousted by a military coup in 2006.

Abhisit, 44, will face an enormous challenge trying to unite the country \_ split in part between the middle class that is his base and the rural poor who backed Thaksin \_ and manage an economy buffeted by Thailand's political turmoil and a global slowdown.

His appointment is expected to bring at least a brief period of calm, although the move

unleashed new protests by supporters of the previous government. Abhisit's image as an upper-class elitist also could hinder his attempts to end the turmoil.

In Monday's vote in the lower house of parliament, Abhisit received support from 235 lawmakers, compared with 198 for a pro-Thaksin former national police chief.

As lawmakers arrived for the vote, Thaksin supporters tried to block the gates of parliament in a last-ditch attempt to prevent the outcome. Riot police later cleared a path for lawmakers to leave the compound. The demonstrators hurled rocks at vehicles and abuse at lawmakers inside but most dispersed peacefully.

Following the vote, Abhisit thanked fellow lawmakers and the public but said he would not talk about politics until he was officially endorsed as prime minister by the constitutional monarch, King Bhumibol Adulyadej. This is expected within several days.

From a wealthy family of Thai-Chinese origin, Abhisit was born in England and educated at Eton and Oxford, where he earned an honors degree in philosophy, politics and economics. His first name means "privilege" in Thai and his friends call him by his foreign nickname, Mark.

He joined the country's oldest party, the Democrats, in 1992 and became one of the youngest ever members of parliament. He rose in the party ranks and in popularity, especially among the educated in Bangkok who took to his clean record, polite demeanor, articulate if somewhat bland speeches and movie-star looks.

The Democrats had been in opposition since 2001, when Thaksin, a former telecommunications tycoon, first took power.

Military leaders ousted Thaksin in September 2006, accusing him of corruption, keeping him in exile and controlling the country for an interim period until elections in December 2007 brought Thaksin's allies



Leader of Democrat Party Abhisit Vejjajiva, center, is congratulated and surrounded by members of parliament after being chosen the country's new prime minister at parliament in Bangkok, Thailand Monday, Dec. 15, 2008.

Associated Press

back into power. He returned to Thailand in February 2008 to face corruption charges but later fled into exile again, and was convicted in absentia.

However, Thaksin, whose whereabouts are unknown, still enjoys significant support among Thailand's rural masses. Until Monday, his supporters had remained in control of the

government.

Reaction to Monday's vote underscored the country's deep divisions.

Abhisit and his party enjoy strong support from the middle class and many in the business sector. Many of his partisans view Thaksin's rural base as easily manipulated and subject to vote buying. □

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The Brazilian-style steakhouse also offers up a garden full of healthy eats on a lavish 40-item seasonal salad bar, giving dieters plenty to choose from to accompany the slow-roasted meats. A selection of fresh lettuces and vegetables may be standard for most salad bars, but Texas de Brazil's version goes a gourmet twist further, treating the palate to additional items like marinated portabella mushrooms, sweet roasted bell peppers, hearts of palm,

sundried tomatoes, imported cheeses—including fresh buffalo mozzarella—sushi, homemade soups, and much more.

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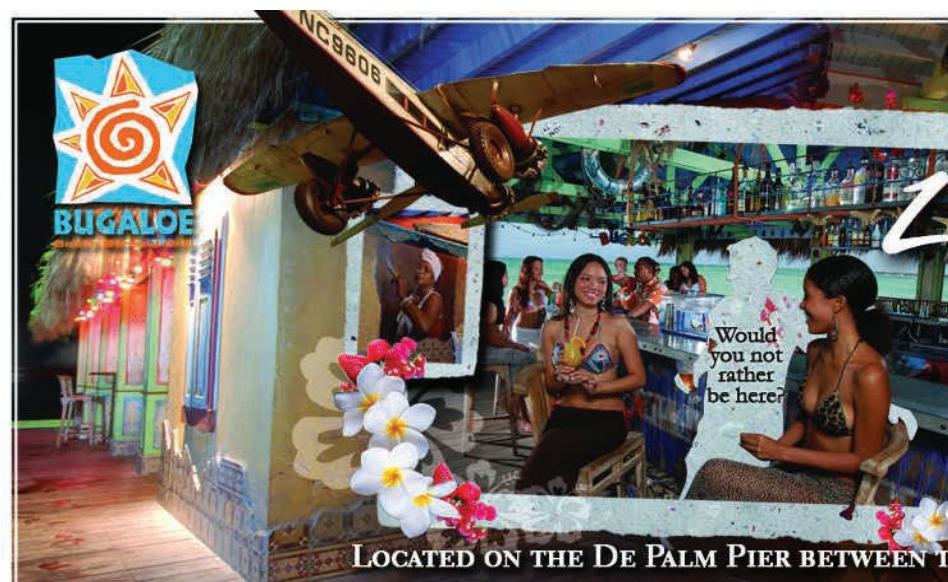
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# SPORTS

## Aruba TODAY

### Golf Writers vote Padraig Harrington player of the year



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HOUSTON (AP) - Double major winner Padraig Harrington was voted player of the year Monday by the Golf Writers Association of America,

receiving 75 percent of the vote to end Tiger Woods' three-year run with the award.

Lorena Ochoa was the overwhelming choice for female player of the year, and Jay Haas became the first golfer to win senior player of the year three times in a row.

Harrington successfully defended his title in the British Open with a four-shot victory at Royal Birkdale, then became the first European in history to win consecutive majors in the same season when he won the PGA Championship at Oakland Hills.

He received 184 votes, with 58 votes going to Woods and five for Vijay Singh. Woods had won the GWAA award the last three years, and has won the award nine times in his career. □



In this June 12, 2008, file photo, Tiger Woods, right, and his caddie, Steve Williams, look on as Phil Mickelson takes a drop on the 17th hole during the first round of the U.S. Open golf championship at Torrey Pines Golf Course in San Diego. Woods said Monday, Dec. 15, 2008, he was disappointed by Williams' disparaging comments in New Zealand newspapers about Mickelson, whom Woods referred to as a 'player I respect.'

*Associated Press*

### Tiger Woods 'disappointed' in caddy's Mickelson remarks

By DOUG FERGUSON  
AP Golf Writer

THOUSAND OAKS, California (AP) - Tiger Woods said he was disappointed by his caddie's disparaging comments about Phil Mickelson in New Zealand newspapers.

Steve Williams was quoted in the Taraki Daily News as saying he wouldn't call Mickelson a great player "because I think he's a (expletive)." When contacted by another New Zealand newspaper, Williams confirmed making the comment. □

### Kings fire coach Reggie Theus



SACRAMENTO, California (AP) - Reggie Theus was fired as coach of the Sacramento Kings on Monday after a 6-18 start to his second season with the NBA club.

Assistant coach Kenny Natt took over the Kings at their shootaround before Monday night's game against Minnesota, spokesman Troy Hanson said. Natt is Sacramento's fourth coach in less than three years. Assistant coach Chuck Person was fired along with Theus, who went 44-62 in his brief tenure with Sacramento.

The Kings have lost 10 of 11 to fall into last place in the Pacific Division, with only a win over the Los Angeles Lakers in the last 3 1/2 weeks. Sacramento's 24-point home loss to the New York Knicks on Saturday night - the ninth loss in 10 games at Arco Arena - was Theus' final game.

Theus' firing was first reported by Yahoo.com. He is the sixth coach fired in the NBA already

this season, following P.J. Carlesimo (Oklahoma City), Eddie Jordan (Washington), Sam Mitchell (Toronto), Randy Wittman (Minnesota) and Maurice Cheeks (Philadelphia), who was dismissed Saturday.

Theus played 13 seasons in the NBA, memorably scoring the first basket for the first Kings team in Sacramento after the club's move to Northern California in 1985. He went 38-44 in his debut season as head coach after the Kings hired him away from New Mexico State, where he built a solid program that marked him as an up-and-coming coaching prospect. But with star guard Kevin Martin sidelined by injuries for all but nine games this season, Sacramento has been among the NBA's worst teams. Martin's left ankle injury and Sacramento's unimpressive roster weren't excuses for owners Joe and Gavin Maloof, who have publicly voiced their displeasure with their

franchise's direction in recent weeks.

Natt is in his second season with the Kings after three years as an assistant with the Cleveland Cavaliers, who reached the NBA Finals in 2007. He played three NBA seasons, including a stint with the Kansas City Kings, before moving up the coaching ranks in a path that included nine seasons as an assistant to Utah coach Jerry Sloan.

In May 2006, the Maloofs fired veteran coach Rick Adelman, who won 395 games and led the Kings to eight consecutive playoff appearances and winning seasons, but no titles. After making that move over the objections of top basketball executive Geoff Petrie, the Maloofs then hired Eric Musselman, who lasted just one tumultuous season before getting fired amid multiple personality conflicts.

Theus, the former player who dabbled in acting and broadcasting before becoming a coach, seemed an ideal coach for the showbiz-loving Maloofs, and he did better than many expected in his rookie year. But a slow start convinced the impatient Maloofs to change direction again - and it will cost them financially.

Theus' departure means the Kings will be paying three head coaching salaries this season to Natt, Theus and Musselman, who still has a year left on his contract. □

### Winter Classic wind will be evened out

CHICAGO (AP) - Those capricious winds at Wrigley Field that make baseballs do crazy things could be a factor on New Year's Day when hockey takes over the home of the Chicago Cubs.

But when the Chicago Blackhawks and Detroit Red Wings meet on a rink that will stretch from first to third base, neither team will have an advantage in the third period -even if it's a blustery and cold day.

That's because they'll switch sides in the middle of the final period, NBC coordinating producer Sam Flood said Monday during a conference call promoting the network's coverage of the Winter Classic.

"I know that plan is in place for this game, so

if those Wrigley winds are blowing out to right field, they will flip the teams' direction after the halfway point of the third period," he said.

Last year when the Winter Classic was played in snowy conditions at Orchard Park, New York, the teams did the same. They switched ends in the third period, with a buzzer going off at the 10-minute mark stopping play.

Last year's inaugural Winter Classic at the Buffalo Bills' Ralph Wilson Stadium - the NHL's first outdoor game in the United States - drew a league-record 71,217 fans. The Pittsburgh Penguins topped the host Sabres 2-1 in a shootout. This year's game at Wrigley Field is expected to draw more than 40,000. □

NFL-Playoff Picture

# Steelers winners, rest of playoff field tighter

NEW YORK (AP) - On a day when competition for most of the playoff spots got tighter, the Pittsburgh Steelers were the only team to clinch a berth.

The Steelers clinched the American Football Conference North, scoring the only touchdown of the game on a 4-yard pass from Ben Roethlisberger to Santonio Holmes with 43 seconds left to beat Baltimore 13-9. The call was so close it had to be reviewed and even after referee Walt Coleman ruled it a score, Ravens coach John Harbaugh continued to protest.

The Steelers (11-3) also are now on track to secure home-field advantage in the AFC playoffs because the Titans (12-2) lost in Houston 13-12. So if Pittsburgh wins in Nashville next week and then again at home the final week against Cleveland, it is the top seed.

A look at the tight playoff races:

**American Football Conference**  
The Titans and Steelers have clinched the South and North divisions.

But the East remained a three-way race among three teams with 9-5 win-loss records: the New York Jets, Miami and New England, all of whom won Sunday.

The Jets and Dolphins meet in the Meadowlands the final Sunday and if both win next week - New York at Seattle and Miami at Kansas City - the winner takes the division. The Patriots, who have Arizona at home and are at Buffalo, would have to take their chances with

a wild-card spot if they can get it because the Jets would finish with a better division record and the Dolphins with a better conference record.

New York, which appeared headed for its third straight loss, stayed alive by the barest of margins, beating the Bills 31-27 when Abram Elam sacked J.P. Losman and Shaun Ellis returned the fumble for the winning touchdown with 1:54 left. New York had been trailing 27-24 and Buffalo was trying to use up the clock.

"That play that Shaun makes and Abe makes, who knows?" quarterback Brett Favre said. "At the end, we may look back and say that could be one of those plays that catapulted us into something great."

Denver (8-6), entered the day needing a win or a San Diego loss to clinch the West. But the Broncos lost in Carolina as expected, 30-10.

But it looked like they might clinch the division anyway before they even started until the Chargers, trailing 21-3 in Kansas City, rallied to win 22-21 to improve to 6-8. The teams meet in San Diego on the final weekend, so San Diego has a shot if it wins at Tampa next week and Denver loses at home to Buffalo.

Indianapolis (10-4) won its seventh straight game by beating winless Detroit and leads the wild-card race. Baltimore (9-5) finishes with Dallas at home and at Jacksonville as it competes with whoever among the Jets, Dolphins and Patriots doesn't win the East for a wild-



New York Giants quarterback Eli Manning (10) fumbles after he was sacked by Dallas Cowboys linebacker DeMarcus Ware (94) during the first quarter of an NFL football game Sunday, Dec. 14, 2008, in Irving, Texas. The Giants recovered the ball.

Associated Press

card spot - unless it can catch Indiana.

National Football Conference  
Nobody clinched anything in the day games, and the 20-8 loss by the Giants (11-3) to Dallas (9-5) Sunday night kept Carolina from clinching a playoff spot. It put the Cowboys at the top of the wild-card standings as the play of their defense overshadowed the problems Tony Romo, Terrell Owens, Jason Witten and the rest of the offensive players were having with each other.

The Panthers, who finish at the Giants and at New Orleans, could go much further - if they

win out, they get home-field advantage in the conference.

They meet next Sunday night at the Meadowlands with home-field advantage in the playoffs at stake and the Giants reeling with Plaxico Burress suspended and Brandon Jacobs injured - their only offensive touchdown in the last two games game was a meaningless one in the final seconds of a loss to the Eagles. Only New York and Arizona (8-6) have clinched playoff spots. The Cardinals, beaten at home by the Vikings 35-14 Sunday, won the weak West last week to ensure their first home playoff game since 1947, when the

Chicago Cardinals won the NFL title. The loss was their third in four games to non-division opponents, with their only win the division-clincher over St. Louis last week.

Tampa Bay and Atlanta (each 9-5) are alive in the South, although both must win out and hope the Panthers lose two. And Chicago (8-6) is a game behind Minnesota (9-5) in the North, so it can still make the playoffs as a division winner or a wild card.

Also alive for wild-card spots are Dallas and Philadelphia (7-5-1), which is at home to Cleveland on Monday night. □

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### Las Campeonas 25

Lot: 695m<sup>2</sup> / 7,478 sq.ft. Home: 168m<sup>2</sup> / 1,808 sq.ft. 3/3 Most charming one story patio home with tropical garden, fully landscaped, salt-system pool and Jacuzzi with wraparound deck. The master bedroom suite and the guest bedroom suite enjoy spectacular private views of the garden. The upgraded kitchen with granite counter top, stainless steel appliances and mahogany finished cabinets, enjoys pool and golf course view, complementing the spacious living & dining areas. Ample custom closets and storage, central air-conditioning and ceiling fans. Furniture and furnishings negotiated separately. **Priced at US\$695,000**



### Miramar 3

Lot: 599 m<sup>2</sup> / 6,448 sq.ft. Home: 161 m<sup>2</sup> / 1,733 sq.ft. 2/2½ Cozy one story casita, 2 master suit bedrooms, 2 ½ bathrooms, with living/dining/kitchen area wide open. Includes a one-car garage and separate laundry room. Nicely landscaped, and ready for occupancy. **Priced at US\$699,000**



### Miramar 27

Lot: 711m<sup>2</sup> / 7,653 sq.ft. Home: 245.45 m<sup>2</sup> / 2,642 sq.ft. 3/4 New construction, just-finished home. Two story home, three bedrooms, spectacular terraces, four baths, panoramic views from everywhere, includes all appliances, Italian furnishings, decorations, drip system, pool with infinity edge. **Priced at US\$1,750,000**



### Las Rocas 14D 149 m<sup>2</sup> / 1,495 sq.ft. 3/2

This second story Las Rocas condo has 3-bedrooms and 2 full bathrooms, dining room and terrace, central air conditioning, hot water heater, stacked washer & dryer, pantry, closets and a one car garage with storage room. Enjoys great golf views and nature preserve. **Priced at US\$450,000**



### Mesa Vista 29 130m<sup>2</sup> / 1,400 sq.ft. 2/2½

Lot: 728 m<sup>2</sup> / 7,836 sq.ft. Home: 274 m<sup>2</sup> / 2,949 sq.ft. 4/3 This two story Hacienda home with expanded living area enjoys a beautiful pool and gazebo with exceptional views, raised Jacuzzi, tiled patio with a large pergola, and a built in BBQ, bar and entertainment area downstairs, with two bedrooms and one bathroom nicely laid out with ample closet space and a rustic pass through kitchen. The upstairs master suite with spacious bedroom, full bathroom and large balcony, enjoys golf and nature preserve views. Two car garage, maid's quarters with bathroom. The home is fully air-conditioned, and will be sold unfurnished. **Priced at US\$ 995,000**



**Bella Vista 12:** Lot: 2,076 m<sup>2</sup> / 22,346 sq.ft. Home: 429.6 m<sup>2</sup> / 4,624 sq.ft. 5/3 plus two ½ This two story luxurious custom-built villa has four-bedrooms, and maid's quarters, a formal dining room, great room, large fully equipped kitchen with breakfast nook, den, pool, gazebo, various patio areas and a two car garage, on the ground floor. The upstairs enjoys lounge areas with ocean views and balconies. All furniture, linen, equipment and tools are included. Just bring your tooth brush. **Priced at US\$2,300,000**



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In this July 27, 2008 file photo, Jim Foster, left, founder of the Arena Football League, holds the trophy with Jon Bon Jovi, a majority owner of the Philadelphia Soul, after their 59-56 win over the San Jose SaberCats in the ArenaBowl XXII football game in New Orleans.

Associated Press

## Arena Football League cancels 2009 season

NEW YORK – Matt D'Orazio heard the rumors every year he played in the Arena Football League.

"There's always grumbling about potential teams folding or something not going as planned," said D'Orazio, the league's reigning MVP for the champion Philadelphia Soul. "But it always seems to start up and always do better than the year before."

Not this time. The 22-year-old AFL announced Monday it's canceling the 2009 season as it seeks to mold a better business model in tough economic times. The decision was pending an agreement with the players union.

League officials hope to return in 2010.

"That is the plan," said Jim Renacci, the Columbus Destroyers' co-owner and vice chairman of the AFL executive committee, who will lead the restructuring process. "Every owner is committed to coming back in 2010."

Renacci left open the possibility the 16-team league could play in 2009 with an abbreviated schedule.

The more than two-thirds of AFL owners needed to approve the measure voted to cancel the season during a conference call Sunday night. The league had issued a statement Wednesday night that said the 2009 season had not been suspended.

"That was probably the longest part of the discussion the owners had: Can we still come back in 2009?" Renacci said on a conference call. "And I think the answer to that is it's always possible, but most likely we need to retool to be fair to fans."

The decision left clubs shedding employees and players scrambling to find work. The Cleveland Gladiators laid off six people Monday. Some players have offseason jobs, while others rely only on their AFL salaries.

"We were just kind of praying and hoping they would find a way to make it work, but apparently they didn't," said Utah Blaze wide receiver Aaron Boone. "It couldn't have come at a worse time, right before Christmas and right when your savings are getting low."

Renacci declined to address what would happen if the union didn't agree to canceling the season. He said acting commissioner Ed Policy was talking with union officials Monday.

"We are in discussions with the Arena Football League to review proposals for play in the 2010 season," union spokesman Carl Francis said.

Team executives listed several problems with the AFL's structure. Players' salaries need to be tied to league revenue, said Michael Young, executive vice president of the Colorado Crush. The AFL itself also must generate more money instead of placing most of the burden on the teams, he said.

Renacci called for the league to become more efficient by centralizing its business operations, such as marketing, sponsorships and ticket sales. Now, each team handles those areas itself. There are 17 different workers' compensation systems in the AFL, he said; everybody could save money if they used the same one. □

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week#2-17-OccidentalGrand-1Bdr Supreme,OceanFront US\$35,000	PlatinumPl. W#51 Marriott Surf. 2Bdr, Oceanview-US\$45,000	week# 50-Paradise Beach 2BTH. R#217,PoolOcean- US\$12,000
week#2-17-OccidentalGrand-1Bdr RoyalClubGrandLe.-US\$30,000	PlatinumPl. W#52 Marriott Surf. 2Bdr,OceanFront-US\$60,000	week# 1- Paradise Beach-1Bdr R#227,OceanFront- US\$15,000
week#49-La Cabana - studio R#209b OceanView- US\$5,000	FloatingW#18-50 Marriott Ocean 1Bdr,Oceanview- US\$12,000	week# 48 - DiviPhoenix - 1Bdr R#207 OceanFront- US\$7,625
week#50 -La Cabana - 1 Bdr R#137c - OceanView-US\$6,000	FloatingW#18-50 Marriott Ocean 2Bdr, Oceanview -US\$ 20,000	week#52 -DiviPhoenix - studio R#110-OceanFront-US\$11,000
Week#51-Divi Phoenix - 1 Bdr R#1401, OceanView - US\$13,500	PlatinumW#1-17.Marriott Ocean 1Bdr, OceanView-US\$18,000	week# 1- DiviPhoenix - 2Bdr. R#206,OceanFront- US\$20,000
week#50 & 51 La Cabana-2 Bdr. R#414,PoolOcean US\$30,000	PlatinumW#1-17.Marriott Ocean 1Bdr,OceanFront-US\$30,000	week# 51-CasaDelMar aw-1Bdr. R#1329,PoolView US\$10,000
week#51-La Cabana - studio R#416b,PoolOcean-US\$7,500	PlatinumW#1-17.Marriott Ocean 2Bdr,OceanView-US\$26,000	week# 50 - RIU Palace - 1Bdr R#566,Oceanview-US\$6,000
week#50-La Cabana - 1Bdr R#227a-OceanView- US\$5,500	PlatinumW#1-17.Marriott Ocean 2Bdr,OceanFront-US\$60,000	week#1 - Riu Palace - 2Bdr R#269-OceanFront- US\$28,000
week#50-La Cabana -1Bdr R#138c-PoolOcean-US\$6,000	week# 50 - Renaissance - 1Bdr. R#2512,Gardenview-US\$9,000	week#48 - Playa Linda -1Bdr R#154-Oceanview-US\$10,000
week#52-La Cabana - 1Bdr R#118a-PoolOcean- US\$12,000	week# 47 - Renaissance - 1Bdr R#2322,OceanView- US\$5,000	week#48-DiviDutchVillage -2Bdr R#76 - PoolView - US\$12,000
Floating w#2-17 Occidental Gra. 1Bdr/dlx-PoolOcean-US\$13,000	week# 48 - Renaissance - 1Bdr. R#2127,PoolOcean- US\$6,000	week# 1-DiviLinks-2Bdr pent. Duplex,Poolview - US\$45,000
Floating w#18-50-Occidental Gr. JuniorS-PoolOcean-US\$11,000	week# 1 & 2 Renaissance-1 Bdr. R#2508,Gardenv.-US\$9,000p.w.	week# 52 - DiviLinks - 1Bdr. R#2206,PoolOcean-US\$15,000
Floating-18-26/36-50-Occidental 1Bdr/dlx,PoolOcean-US\$10,000	week# 51 - Renaissance - 1 Bdr. R#2311,PoolOcean- US\$12,000	week# 50 & 51-DiviLinks - 1 Bdr. R#4226,Poolview-US\$16,000pw
Floating W# 1-17-Occidental Gr. studio,PoolOceany-US\$9,000	week# 51-Aruba Resort - 1 Bdr. R#4584g, PoolView - US\$9,475	week# 52 & 1- DiviLinks - 1Bdr R#4226,PoolV.- US\$17,000pw
Floating W#18-50.Marriott Surf. 2Bdr,Oceanview- US\$23,000	week#51&52.ArubaResort-1Br R#4586, PoolView-US\$9,475pw	week# 2 & 3-DiviLinks- 1 Bdr R#4226,PoolV.- US\$15,000p.w
Floating W#18-50.Marriott Surf. 2Bdr,Gardenview- US\$20,000	week# 1 & 2,ArubaResort-1Bdr R#4585,Poolview- US\$8,475pw	week# 49-Renaissance-1BdrIdx R#2349,OceanFront,US\$10,000
Floating W#18-50.Marriott Surf. 2Bdr,OceanSide- US\$23,000	week# 2,Aruba Resort-1 Bdr. R#4584 ,PoolView-US\$.8,475	week#50-ParadiseBeach-1Bdr. R#101,PoolOcean- US\$10,000
Floating W#18-50.Marriott Surf. 3Bdr,Oceanview- US\$30,000	week# 51,Aruba Resort - 1 Bdr R#3525, PoolView - US\$9,475	week# 50&51-Costa Linda-2Bdr R#3007,PoolOcean-US\$50,000
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# Muere polémico ex presidente ecuatoriano León Febres Cordero

QUITO (Reuters) - El ex presidente de Ecuador, León Febres Cordero, murió el lunes de cáncer de pulmón a los 77 años, en medio de los rezos de decenas de simpatizantes que apoyaban al polémico líder político en su dolencia, confirmaron sus coidearios a medios locales.

Febres Cordero, un ingeniero mecánico que lideró por años al otrora poderoso Partido Social Cristiano (PSC), gobernó el país entre 1984 y 1988 con mano dura, con la que logró imponerse en otros sectores públicos clave y combatir a un grupo guerrillero que emergió en el país.

Conocido, como "el dueño del país" por su influencia en las cortes de justicia y su intensa forma de gobernar, Febres Cordero ocupó varios cargos públicos desde donde combatió a sus rivales políticos e impuso sus tesis de derecha.

La lucha contra el terrorismo



Foto de archivo de una conferencia de prensa del ex presidente de Ecuador León Febres Cordero en Guayaquil, 22 mar 1999. Febres Cordero, murió el lunes de cáncer de pulmón a los 77 años, en medio de los rezos de decenas de simpatizantes que apoyaban al polémico líder político en su dolencia, confirmaron sus coidearios a medios locales. GG/HB/CLH/

se convirtió en la política del régimen, lo que dio paso a atropellos a los derechos

humanos, según varias organizaciones.

quienes lo llamaban el Presidente, y odiados por sus adversarios políticos, el ex

mandatario logró llegar a la presidencia del país gracias a sus ofrecimientos de "pan, techo y empleo", un lema que caló entre los sectores pobres del país.

"El presidente León Febres Cordero ha dejado la vida terrena para inmortalizarse como uno de los líderes de la historia del país", dijo su amigo personal Alfonso Harb, a periodistas.

Paulatinamente, fue desvinculándose de la política del país por sus múltiples dolencias, hasta retirarse definitivamente de la dirigencia política cuando el presidente Rafael Correa asumió la presidencia del país en el 2007.

Febres Cordero viajaba constantemente a Estados Unidos para sus tratamientos médicos.

Correa, un popular líder de izquierda, lo calificó como uno de sus principales adversarios políticos.

## Ecuador dice declarar "moratoria técnica" Global 2015

QUITO (Reuters) - Ecuador decidió el lunes no pagar un bono Global 2015 y acogerse a un período de gracia de un mes, profundizando la incertidumbre entre los inversores sobre si el país sumará más títulos públicos a la moratoria que declaró la semana pasada sobre parte de su deuda externa.

La ministra de Finanzas, Elsa Viteri, dijo escuetamente a periodistas que el Gobierno no cancelaría el vencimiento de 30,9 millones de dólares que operaba este lunes, al declararse en "mora técnica".

El 15 de noviembre, Ecuador tomó la misma decisión con su bono Global 2012, para luego anunciar el viernes pasado que dejaba de pagar los cupones de ese título público luego de que una comisión de auditoría dijera que era ilegítimo

porque en su contratación se violaron leyes locales e internacionales.

La auditoría no incluyó dentro de los tramos de deuda ilegal a los bonos Global 2015, con un capital de 650 millones de dólares, argumentando falta de tiempo para analizarlos.

Pero, Correa, quien con su decisión hundió al pequeño país en su segundo "default" en menos de una década", los había calificado de ilegales por su conexión con los bonos con vencimientos en el 2012 y 2030.

En medio de los anuncios, las agencias calificadoras de crédito Standard & Poor's y Fitch dijeron el lunes que recortaban la deuda de Ecuador.

Standard & Poor's rebajó la calificación de la deuda ecuatoriana de largo y corto plazo a "SD" (default selectivo) desde "CCC-" y "C", respectivamente,

por la decisión de Correa de declarar en "default" los bonos Global 2012.

Fitch Ratings dijo poco después que había decidido recortar la calificación de los bonos de Ecuador a largo plazo en moneda extranjera a "RD" (Default Restrictivo) desde "CCC", mientras que la deuda a corto plazo fue reducida a "D" desde "C" tras expirar el pago de un cupón de los bonos 2012.

Aunque las obligaciones financieras de Ecuador apenas rondan el 30 por ciento de su PIB, la caída en el precio del crudo, sumado a la desaceleración económica por la crisis mundial, pueden poner en aprietos la capacidad de pago del país, que es el miembro más pequeño de la OPEP.

Además, Correa necesita disponer de fondos para seguir financiando el batallón de planes sociales que sustentan su popularidad. □



# PRESENTS

**18 DECEMBER**

**Time: starts @ 8 pm**

## Cheese & Wine evening



**5 wines &**

**5 different cheeses**

**Participation  
\$20,-**

**21 DECEMBER**

## Grupo di Betico

**Time:**

**starts @ 8 pm**

**Live band!!!**

New years Party

**3 JANUARY**

## Tsunami

2 outside bars

Balashi Afl. 5,-

**Time: starts @ 9 pm**



**EVERY TUESDAY**

**BAILEYS QUIZNIGHT**

**Starts at 8pm**



**HOLIDAYS**

*Cafe the Plaza wishes  
you a merry christmas  
and a happy new year!*

**Cafe the Plaza: Member of Aruba wine and dine**